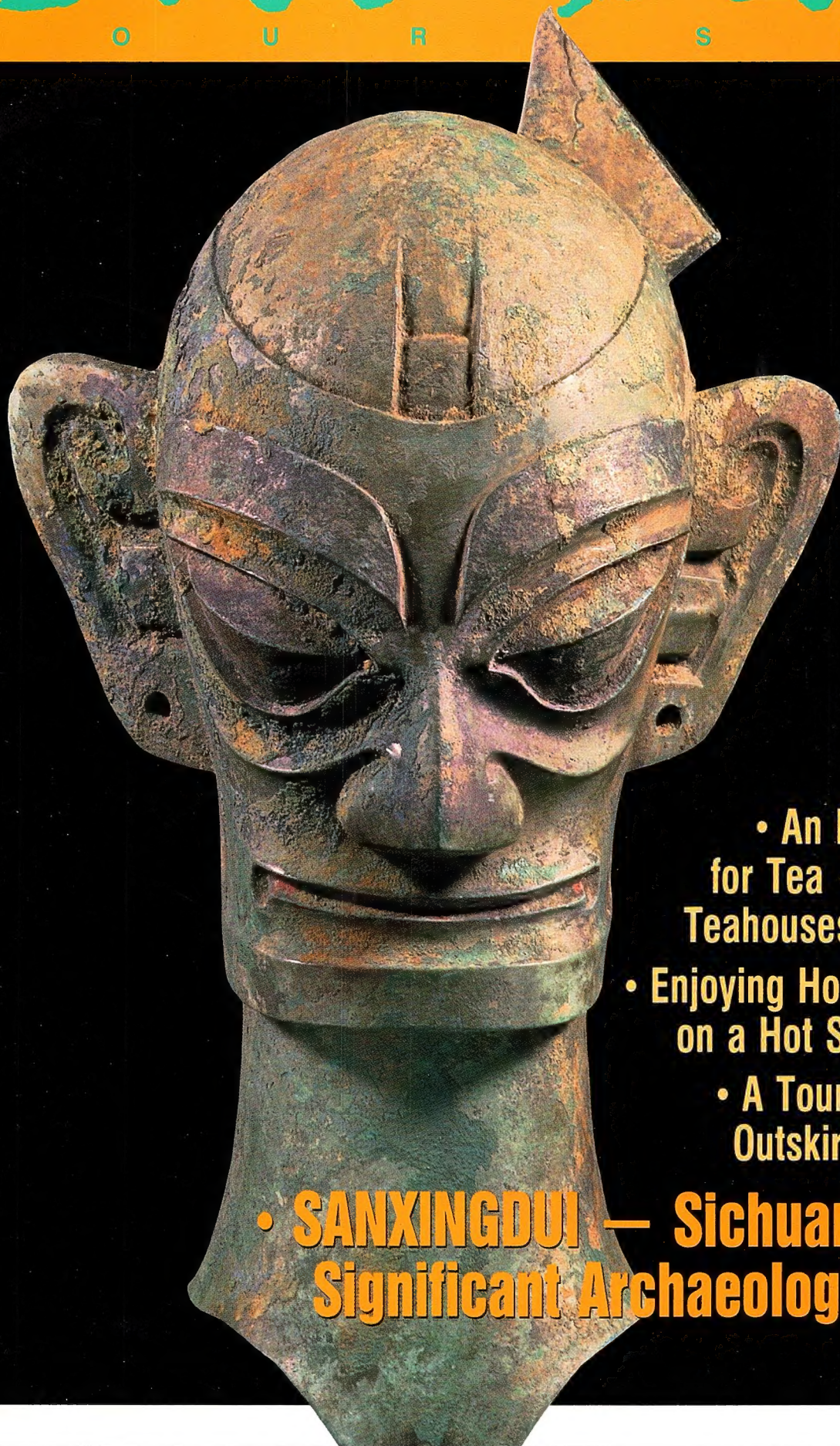


China

T O U R I S M

FEBRUARY 1993

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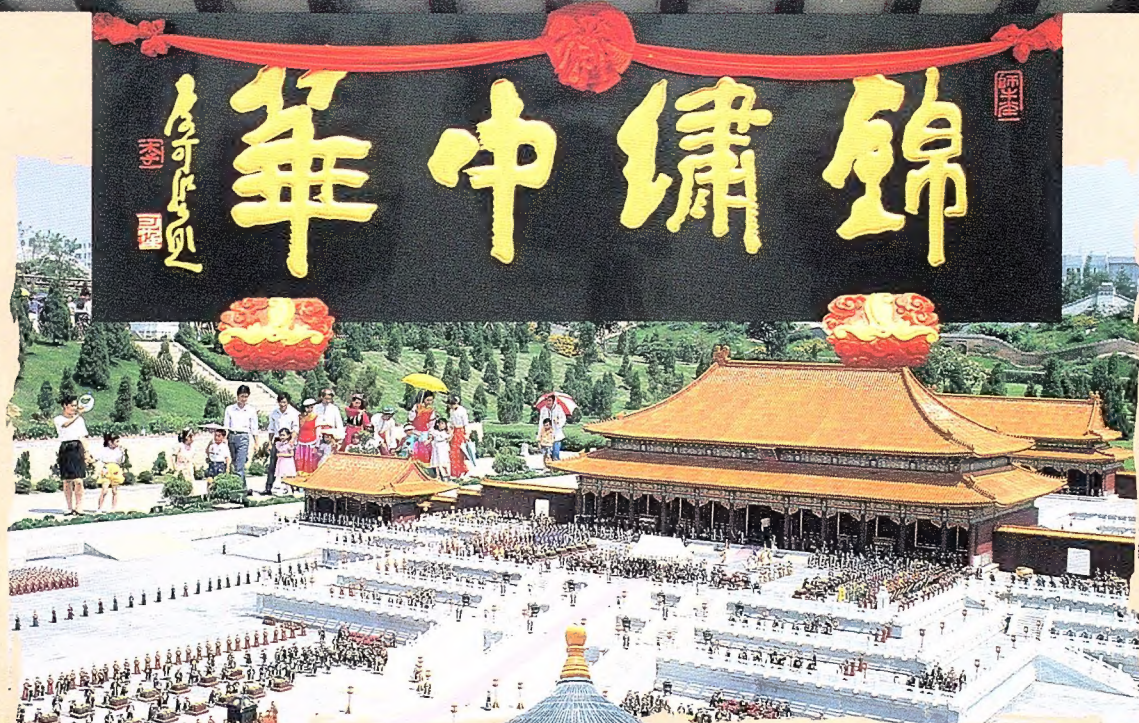
- An Eternal Love for Tea — A Visit to Teahouses in Sichuan
- Enjoying Hot-Pot Dishes on a Hot Summer Day
- A Tour Around the Outskirts of Beijing
- **SANXINGDUI — Sichuan's Most Significant Archaeological Site**

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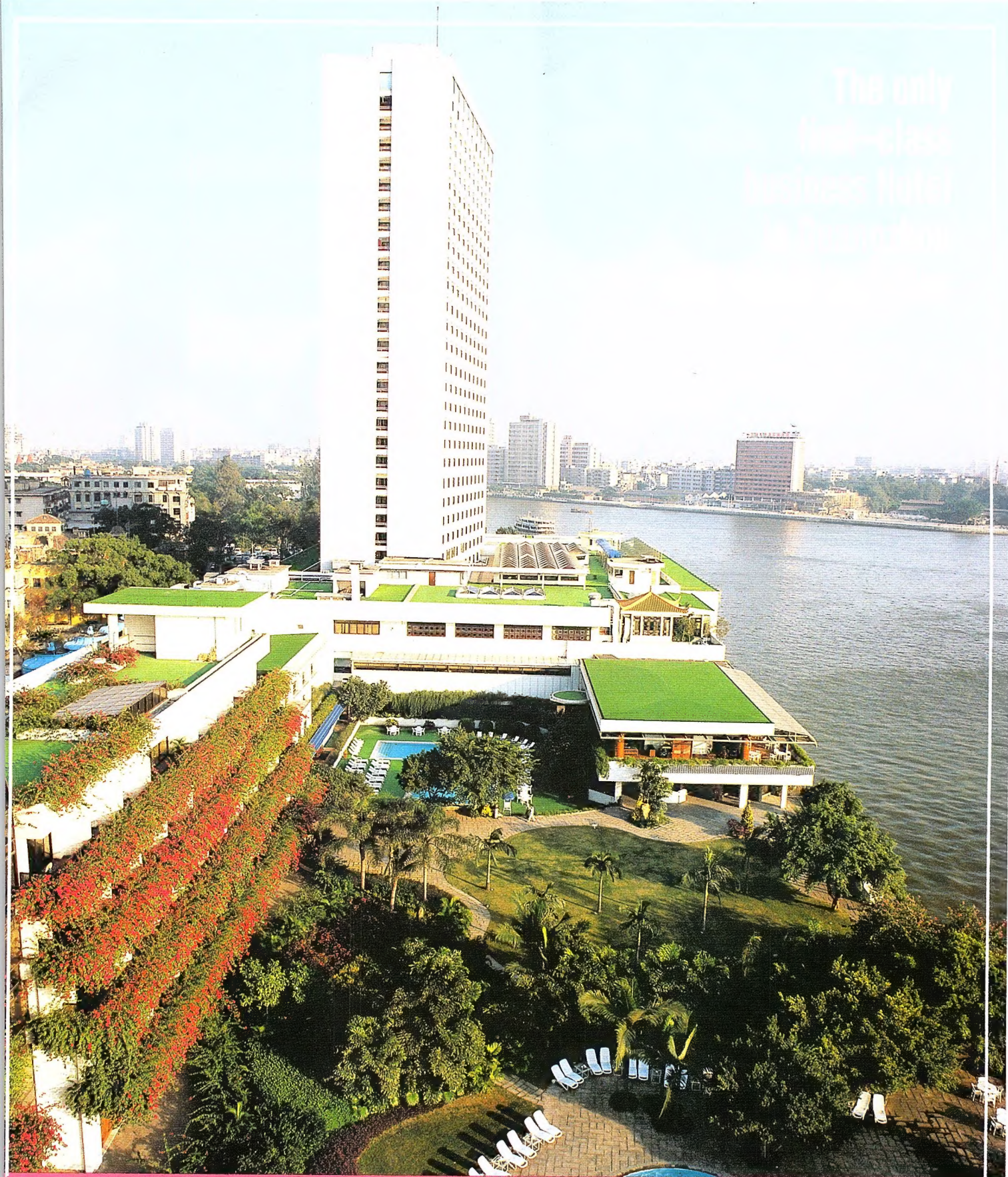
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EDITORIAL



Escape from Winter by Appreciating China and Her Culture

As winter begins to loosen its icy grip, the beginning of spring reminds us that warmer weather is on the way which will decorate the landscape with a riot of hues on a green background. While the northern part of China remains cold, in the southern part of the country, spring is already adding fresh colours to the environment. In the realm of human endeavours, many of our readers are planning to take advantage of the warm weather and travel to many parts of China.

In this issue, we introduce our readers to suburban tour routes in Beijing. While most tourists prefer to confine their itinerary to the numerous historical and cultural attractions of the city, the outskirts of the city actually offer the best of both worlds. In addition to historically significant sites such as the Great Wall and a tomb dating back to the Western Han Dynasty, adjacent to many such sites, there are also some panoramic views of breathtaking scenery to be appreciated.

If beautiful scenery is what one seeks, the Nanxi River, a tributary of the Oujiang River near Wenzhou in Zhejiang, offers a pleasant alternative to the crowded tourist spots in that province. Just recently opened to outside visitors, an idyllic trip along the Nanxi River presents some pristine panorama.

Venturing further south to Huizhou in Guangdong in the booming Pearl River Delta near Hong Kong, we witness the effects of economic development on the customs and traditions of the natives. Readers would be interested to learn that Su Dongpo, the Song Dynasty scholar-official, was once exiled here and, coincidentally, there is a West Lake here as well.

Moving west, we bring you a bit of the flavour of Sichuan. If one wants to spice up a trip to China, a visit to any one of a number of hot-pot restaurants in Chongqing, also known as the "Stove City", is in order. Unlike elsewhere in China, the locals seem to enjoy the spicy dishes laced with chilli during the steamy summer months. If one cannot stand the heat in Chongqing, Sichuan offers a more refreshing choice — sipping tea in Chengdu. In any one of the provincial capital's ubiquitous teahouses, one can quietly while away a day in a teahouse or, if one craves a little more action, can sip tea while enjoying a lively performance, for teahouses are a nurturing ground for the culture of Sichuan.

We then venture back to one of the earliest repositories of culture in Sichuan — the Bronze Age site at Sanxingdui. The enormous quantities and the truly unique forms of some of these objects have stirred considerable debate as to the exact significance of Sanxingdui's role in the Shang Dynasty (c. 16th-11th century B.C.).

Please turn the page, and escape from the cold and begin to learn more about the tourist attractions, history and culture of China.

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The large city walls, the impressive numbers and outstanding workmanship of the artifacts and the extensive area of the finds point to the strong possibility that this site may represent an early capital of the Kingdom of Shu.



INTERESTING INTERLUDES IN SICHUAN



An Eternal Love for Tea — A Visit to Teahouses in Sichuan

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Photos by Chen Jin/Article by Jiang Xiaoqing

Throughout the province, but especially in Chengdu, the capital, visiting teahouses is one of the preferred ways of passing time and the teahouses themselves often have a rich tradition.

Enjoying Hot-Pot Dishes on a Hot Summer Day

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Photos by Chen Jin/Article by Ye Nong

The fact that the residents of Chongqing, one of China's warmest cities, prefer hot-pots laced with spicy chilli during the steamy summer is examined.



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Photos by Chan Yat Nin/Article by Hua Nian

Many of the lesser known cultural and religious sites are truly fascinating and offer some beautiful views as well.

Huizhou — Where Su Dongpo Once Lived

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This town in Guangdong Province also features one of China's three famous West Lakes.



LANDSCAPES AROUND CHINA



Nanxi River, Where Scenic Spots Abound

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Photos by Shao Jiaye/Article by Chen Weirong

This tributary of the Oujiang River in populous Zhejiang offers surprisingly pristine panoramas.

FASCINATING CUSTOMS

Vying for the Iron Ring The Huapao Festival of the Dong People

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Photos & Text by Wei Rongguang

This festival held in the third lunar month in Sanjiang, Guangxi is actually a fired iron ring competition won by following a tactic resembling a draft play in an American football game.



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Bronze human-head figure

(Height: 36.5cm)

Unearthed from Pit 2

(Photo by Xiang Guiyuan & Jiang Cong)

What distinguishes this bronze image are the flat-top head, big eyes in the shape of apricot leaves, low and flat cheekbones, a pointed nose on a long, thin face, a pair of big ears with cloud patterns and the long hair plaited at the back of the head.

Sanxingdui

*— Sichuan's Most
Significant
Archaeological Site*

PHOTOS & ARTICLE BY AO XINGQUAN



Gold cane
(Length: 142 cm)
Unearthed from Pit 1
(Photo by Xiang
Guiyuan & Jiang Cong)

This cane is coated with pure gold foils. Its upper end is decorated with incised patterns of fish and birds, with an arrow emanating from the fish and running through the birds.

Kneeling bronze figure
(Height: 15 cm)
Unearthed from Pit 1

At first sight, the head and face closely resemble a monster and the jaw here is more squared. The lines here are more rigid, and the facial expression is more sombre and less lively than above. The figure is dressed in a long-sleeved jacket and pants with a double-circled belt.



Even to well-informed members of archaeological circles, the cultural relics unearthed at Sanxingdui (Three Star Mounds) stirred great excitement. Literally tens of thousands of earthenware, stone, gold, bronze and jade ware and other objects have been unearthed. Especially noteworthy are the nearly 1,000 exquisite archaeological treasures found in the two big pits thirty metres apart containing sacrificial objects of the Shang Dynasty (c. 16th-11th century B.C.) which have been excavated since 1986.

Here is a partial list of the uncovered hoard: an ancient bronze upright figurine considered to be the best of its kind in the world; a peculiarly designed bronze human mask — the biggest and earliest extant in China; a pure gold sceptre symbolizing royal power; a uniquely shaped bronze spirit tree older and taller than anything similar found in the world; a paper-thin gold visor; mysterious and bizarre bronze animal face masks, jade articles such as rings, knives and chisels; scores of precious elephant tusks and thousands of sea shells. The most intriguing objects are bronze heads with angular facial features and enormous eyes.

More Extraordinary than the Famous Chinese Terra-Cotta Figures

To connoisseurs, what makes them gasp with admiration is that the articles unearthed at Sanxingdui are superbly made and yet well preserved sacrificial vessels and precious cultural relics.

Jessica Rosen, chief expert on Chinese archaeology of the British Museum in London, said: "It seems that these finds are more extraordinary than the famous Chinese terra-cotta figures of soldiers and horses."

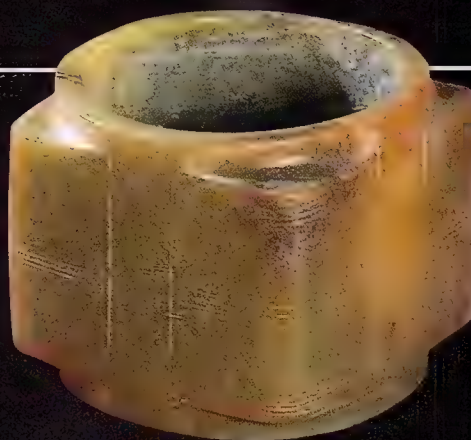
In his article "The Non-pareil Chinese Bronze Statues" published in the newspaper *Independent* of Great Britain, David Keith wrote that the finds in Guanghan City in Sichuan probably represent the largest number of metallurgical cultural relics at a single excavation site.

Their discovery is likely to lead people to reevaluate previously held conceptions of Chinese art as a whole. For a long time China's bronze manufacture had been considered the most advanced in antiquity, yet this discovery, both in terms of the sheer volume of pieces and in quality of metal and workmanship, has raised people's interest and understanding of China's metallurgical technology and production processes to new heights.

In fact, this discovery has created a great sensation among experts in the fields of archaeology, fine arts, metallurgy and history both within China and abroad. These excellently crafted artifacts certainly stand out among the wealth of treasures in Chinese art history. The tasks of repairing and analyzing the artifacts are far from complete.

Ba-Shu Culture — an Important Source of Chinese Culture

For a long time it was assumed that the culture of the ancient Shu Kingdom in what is now Sichuan (the word Shu survives as the literary word for Sichuan) developed more slowly than that of the Central Plains in China. The cultural relics unearthed at Sanxingdui,



Shang Dynasty jade zong

Crude as it might appear, this is in fact a priceless antique dating from the Shang Dynasty. Unearthed from Yueliangwan in 1929, this Shang jade zong represents the state of that art in the remote past.

however, have convincingly disproved this verdict, clearly demonstrating that the Ba-Shu culture was an important source of Chinese culture.

As early as more than 3,000 years ago, at what is now Sanxingdui once stood a ring of thick, solid city walls surrounded by a deep moat. Within the bounds of the city walls were 2.6 square kilometres of densely populated residential quarters, handicraft workshops and palaces. It was in the ruins of the palaces that an abundance of jade sacrificial vessels, musical instruments, ceramic artistic objects and incised lacquer ware was discovered.

Thousands of rare pure gold objects, large bronze vessels, jade articles, elephant tusks and sea shells were buried in the two pits containing sacrificial objects outside the southern city wall. On some of the unearthed objects are inscribed the early script of the Ba-Shu people.



Gold tiger

(Length: 11.7 cm)

Unearthed from Pit 1

(Photo by Xiang Guiyuan & Jiang Cong)

The tiger is crouching on its hind legs with its forelegs stretching forward and tail looped upward in a posture ready to pounce. Its slender body, however, is different from that of a real tiger, being somewhat deformed. This gold tiger with streaks pressed all over looks quite imposing and even menacing in its brilliance.



A view of the Sanxingdui site. This treasure-trove of priceless and significant relics has been unearthed here.

All these finds, together with the remains of a grand palace complex constructed of timber dating from about the same period found in the pre-Shu culture stratum at Shi'erqiao, Chengdu, and a three-tiered square terrace about ten metres high and 103 metres long discovered on Yangzishan in Chengdu, irrefutably demonstrate that the organization of the cities, script, metallurgy and large ceremonial centres had by that period advanced from their origins suggesting a clearly defined transition from the end of the pre-Shu culture to the beginning of the Ba-Shu culture.

Accidentally Uncovered Sixty Years Ago

The initial discovery which eventually led to the excavation of the Sanxingdui hoard took place by sheer accident. In the spring of 1929, Yan Daocheng and his two grandchildren who lived at Yan's Court in Yueliangwan (meaning "moon bay"), while digging ditches for irrigating the fields near their house, chanced upon a pit containing about 300 to 400 jade and stone objects, most of which unfortunately were lost later on. News about their discovery immediately spread far and wide. Later, during the winter of 1933, Lin Mingjun of the Museum of Huaxi University (now the Museum of Sichuan University) and Ge Weihai, an American professor, went to Yueliangwan for trial excavations, which yielded some jade and earthenware objects. Lin Mingjun wrote to Guo Moruo, China's renowned historian, archaeologist and palaeographer who was then in Japan engaging in the study of inscriptions on oracle bones of the Shang Dynasty and on ancient bronze vessels, telling the latter about the excavation and their gains. In his reply, Guo said, "The finds in Hanzhou (present-day Guanghan), such as a jade *bi* (a round flat piece), jade *zhang* (a tablet with a pointed tip) and jade *gui* (an elongated tablet), are similar to those discovered in northern or central China. This clearly demonstrates that there were cultural contacts between ancient western Shu and northern or central China."

In the mid-1950s, archaeologists from Sichuan renewed probes in this area, conducting several archaeological investigations, clearance activities and excavations. In their efforts, they uncovered many remains including stone building materials, pottery fragments and hoards in cellars, as well as a considerable number of precious cultural relics. At the same time, they developed preliminary theories about the extent of this historical site and its cultural and historical implications.

New finds were made in succession later on. In 1958 and 1963, Sichuan archaeologists found some jade and stone objects at Yueliangwan. In 1964, while digging a pit at a spot about some fifty to sixty metres from where the farmer Yan's family had made their



Even clearing up the mess of these precious relics takes considerable effort.

initial discovery, some farmers discovered another hoard of jade objects by pure chance. In 1974, at Suozitian to the northwest of Yueliangwan was found a pit containing several scores of whetstones. Hard and smooth, and with green or yellowish colours resembling jade, these stones, experts believe, were tools for grinding and polishing jade objects. Later, in the fields around Yueliangwan stone axes, stone chisels and stone adzes were unearthed.

In 1976, a brickfield was set up near Sanxingdui. As clay was extracted for brick production, a section of more than 200 metres was formed on the Sanxingdui tableland. In part of this section many different cultural accumulations were found. In May 1980, in the course of trial excavations at the east of the Sanxingdui mounds Sichuan archaeologists uncovered jade and earthenware objects. From November 1980 to May 1981, on the basis of trial excavations formal excavations were made on the east side in the middle section of the mounds. The result was the discovery of eighteen house sites, three ash pits and four tombs, as well as the unearthing of over 110 jade and stone objects, seventy-odd earthenware specimens and more than 100,000 pottery shards.

Cultural Strata of Late Shang and Early Zhou Discovered

In April and December of 1982, two excavations were conducted on the southeast side of Sanxingdui. Both were on a small scale yet



Relics must be hauled up with great care.



Some of the relics are corroded owing to their long burial.

had important findings as strata dating from the late Shang and early Zhou period were explored. Unearthed were small flat-bottomed jars, earthenware with teat-shaped legs, cups with pointed bottoms and eggshell jars with pointed bottoms. These objects were ascertained to be from a time immediately after the period to which the statue of Bodhisattva unearthed at Xinfanshui belonged, therefore they fill the archaeological gap from the late Shang to the early Zhou period in the Sichuan region.

Another significant find from these two excavations was the discovery of the site of a small kiln. Standing on an inverted U-shaped site, the kiln had a sloping base and straight walls. The diameter of the kiln's opening was about 44 cm, and there was a flue in its rear for smoke exhaust.

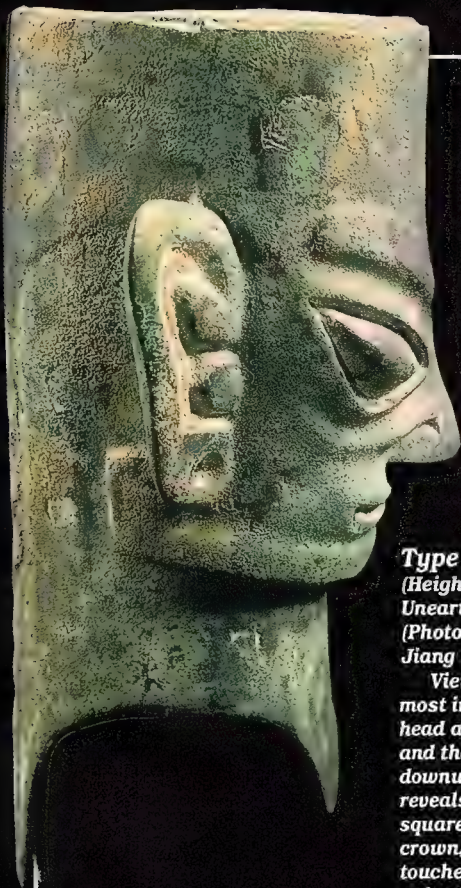
From March to May 1984, seven exploratory holes were dug by archaeologists at Xiquankan by the Temple to Emperor Zhenwu, 1,000 metres north to Sanxingdui. A profusion of pottery and stone objects were unearthed. Among them were small flat-bottomed and pointed-bottomed jars, high-stemmed bowls, ladles and wine

vessels. There were also numerous house sites and many completed or partially completed stone walls and waste materials. These things suggest that there was probably a workshop for processing stone walls.

The archaeological excavations conducted from March through May 1986 were the largest ever in extent. The result was the discovery of ten strata with deposits of cultural artifacts in layers as deep as 215 metres. The stratigraphic relations were clearly delineated, which serves as a useful reference for the study of the ancient Ba-Shu culture and particularly for developing a chronology.

Cultural relics unearthed in 1986 found nearly 2,000 wares, including deep cooking pots with fluted rims, high-stemmed containers, pots, cups, long-stemmed wine goblets, tripod-shaped cooking pots, wine containers, vessel covers, vases, small flat-bottomed jars and big jars. Some 109 ash pits and dozens of house sites were also found.

(Continued on page 94)



Type IV bronze head

(Height: 34 cm)

Unearthed from Pit 2

(Photos by Xiang Guiyuan & Jiang Cong)

Viewed from the front, the most impressive features on the head are the heavy eyebrows and the big eyes casting downward, while the profile reveals a flat nose. Wearing a square flat-topped flowery crown, this bronze head is touched with a mystic air by the pair of large ears with a hole punched in each earlobe.



Type III bronze head

(Height: 46.6 cm)

Unearthed from Pit 2

(Photo by Xiang Guiyuan & Jiang Cong)

The hair on the ball-shaped cranium is combed backward, crowned by a butterfly-shaped hairpiece. The neck thickens downward gradually and is shaped like a spearhead towards the bottom. The pair of thick eyebrows and the large somewhat triangular eyes underneath are all exaggerated. Very likely, this was the image of a sorcerer.



Bronze head with gold mask

(Height: 50.4 cm)

Unearthed from Pit 2

(Photo by Xiang Guiyuan & Jiang Cong)

Hidden beneath the gold mask are bronze eyes and eyebrows. The large eyes seem to be looking down, which serve as the only clue for anyone to probe the inner world of this masked man.



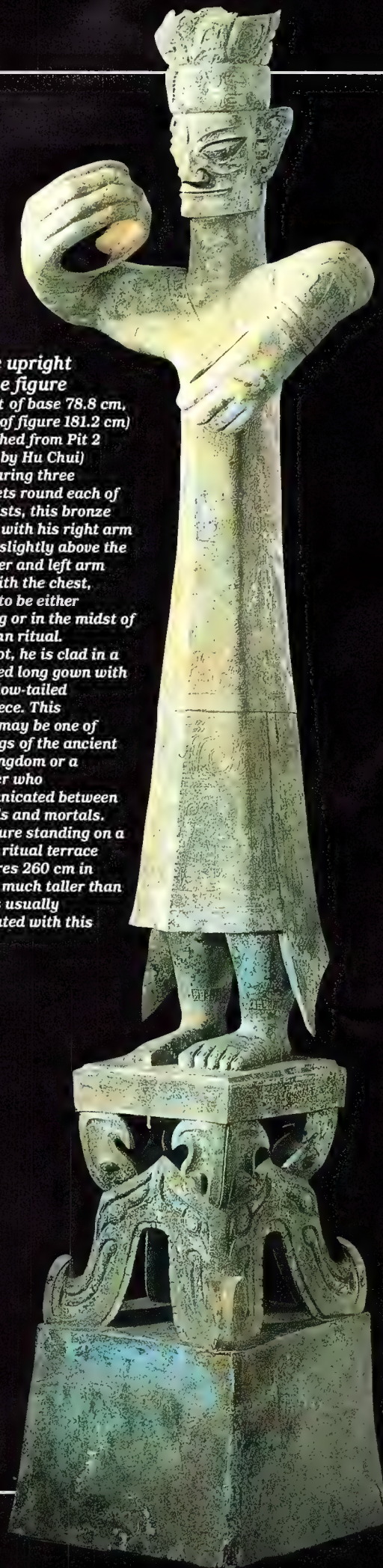
Large upright bronze figure

(Height of base 78.8 cm, height of figure 181.2 cm)

Unearthed from Pit 2

(Photo by Hu Chui)

Wearing three bracelets round each of his wrists, this bronze figure, with his right arm raised slightly above the shoulder and left arm level with the chest, seems to be either dancing or in the midst of a solemn ritual. Barefoot, he is clad in a V-necked long gown with a swallow-tailed backpiece. This figure may be one of the kings of the ancient Shu Kingdom or a sorcerer who communicated between the gods and mortals. The figure standing on a square ritual terrace measures 260 cm in height, much taller than statues usually associated with this period.



Type I Bronze animal mask
 (Height: 21 cm, width: 38.4 cm)
 Unearthed from Pit 2
 (Photo by Xiang Guiyuan &
 Jiang Cong)

What is interesting about this particular artifact is that the mask is the shape of the bronze itself and not a design on a ritual vessel. It is also lacking incised thunder patterns and other incised designs found in most bronzes from this period, displaying the local flavour of Sanxingdui.

Type II Human image with protruding eyes
 (Height: 65 cm, width: 138 cm)
 Unearthed from Pit 2
 (Photo by Xiang Guiyuan &
 Jiang Cong)

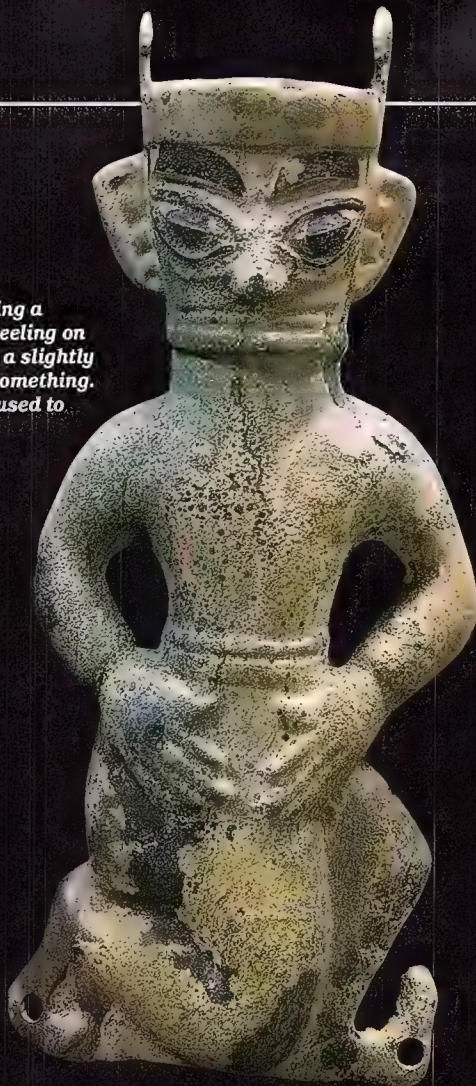
Although the lines of this object are simple and lack virtually any stylization, and the form of its face remains vaguely human and is roughly similar in shape to those depicted elsewhere, it is unusual. Thanks to its protuberant eyeballs (16 cm long) and ears, which convey the impression of a being possessing preternatural powers, its appearance is more awe-inspiring than that of others previously shown.



Bronze kneeling figurine

(Height: 13.3 cm)
Unearthed from Pit 2

This small bronze figurine wearing a flat-topped hat with two horns is kneeling on one leg, and bending his right leg in a slightly inclined position, as if praying for something. It is believed that this figurine was used to hang at the side of some vessels.



Bronze mythological tree pedestal

Unearthed from Pit 2

As the name indicates, the holy tree is different from any other trees. In addition to foliage and fruit, it is inhabited by many birds and animals and decorated by all manner of bells, jade pieces and other objects. Considering its potential religious significance it is interesting that there are more stylized patterns decorating this object.

This holy tree is supposed to be a ladder for the deities to commute between the celestial and the secular worlds.

Originally, the holy tree was much taller. Its surviving remains are only 380 cm — but still much taller than twice the average height of a man.



Type I Human image with protruding eyes

(Height: 82.5 cm, width: 77.5 cm)

Unearthed from Pit 2

This image is similar to that on the left hand side. Although with his eyes protruding only 9 cm he is decorated on his head by an exaggerated horn 0.3 to 0.6 m thick and 66 cm high. The relief work is more finely detailed here than in the other pieces.



An Eternal Love for Tea

A Visit to Teahouses in Sichuan

PHOTOS BY CHEN JIN

ARTICLE BY JIANG SHAOQING





Whether strangers or acquaintances, once in a teahouse, visitors sit and chat with each other.

Large: Dual entertainment: watching the performance while enjoying a cup of tea.



Teahouse waiters display great manual dexterity in their work. They can hold some twenty tea cups with covers in one hand almost appearing as if they were doing an acrobatic show.



Sichuan Province in southwestern China is known for its great number of teahouses. Initially appearing in the Tang Dynasty (618-907), teahouses began to flourish in the region during the Song Dynasty (960-1279). The Sichuan people's habit of drinking tea became more professed during the Ming

(1368-1644) and Qing (1644-1911) periods, when streets were literally lined with teahouses. Today, the great number of teahouses is one of the major characteristics of Chengdu, capital of the province. In Jinjiang District alone, one of the five city districts that make up Chengdu which is also surrounded by eleven suburban counties, there are over two hundred teahouses. Of course the number of teahouses owes much to the great amount of tea produced in Sichuan.

Refined and Elegant

Over the years, tea drinking has evolved into an entertainment of refined taste. The environment for tea drinking, therefore, ideally should be beautiful and elegant. *The Story of the Flower House* written during the Ming Dynasty by Lu Shusheng listed a variety of places including shaded terraces, quiet rooms, houses with bright windows, river bends, monasteries, pine woods and bamboo groves as ideal places for enjoying a cup of tea. Precisely because of this, it is only natural for us to see teahouses at scenic spots and sites of historical interest such as the teahouses at the Thatched House of Du Fu (712-770), the famous Tang poet, Memorial Hall of Zhuge Liang (181-234), a military strategist of the third century, and in other gardens.

With so much tradition behind them, teahouses are a great source of pride for people in Sichuan. Once you ask about these establishments in Chengdu, they will spout out traditionally famous names of teahouses as if listing the family treasure — the Mingyuan (Tea Garden), Qixiangju (Fragrance Hall), Yuelai (Joy) Teahouse, Binjiang Huaniao



Having no urgent affairs to mind, this old lady passes the time by enjoying tea from a covered teacup (by Wang Dajun).



The great number of patrons keep the waiters running, and the long-mouthed copper teapots on the stove whistle with boiling water.



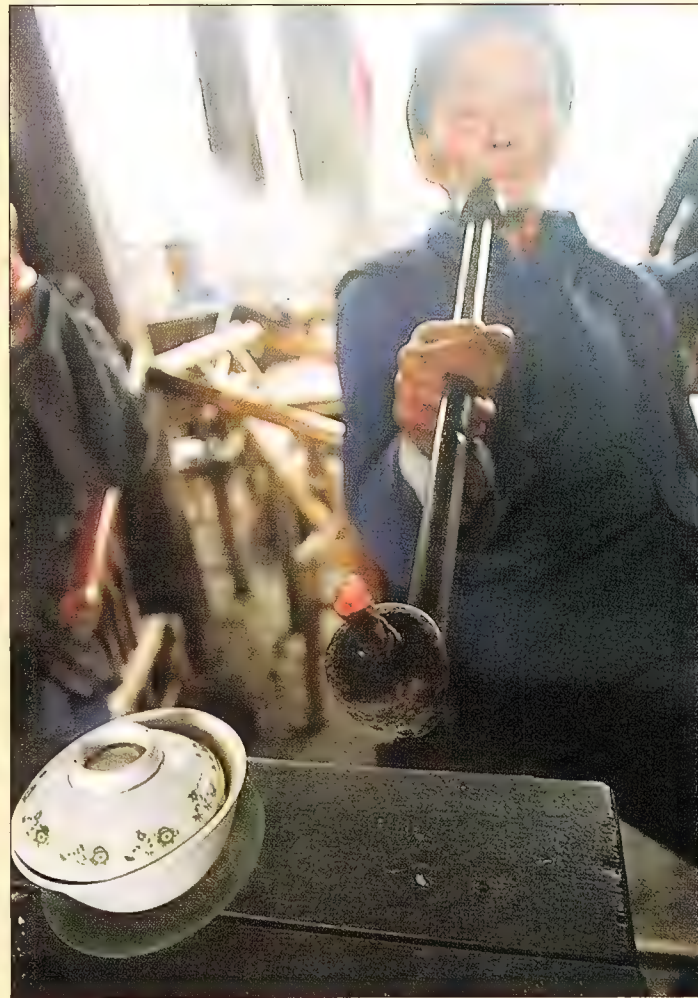
The teahouse is well integrated with the surroundings and people's conversation is complemented pleasantly by the singing of birds. This is the most ideal situation for a Sichuan teahouse.

(Riverside Flower and Bird) Garden. The list goes on and on. If you wander into these places, you will discover that no matter whether it is early in the morning or late in the evening they are always packed to capacity with visitors.

Sichuan tea drinkers have particular specifications for tables and chairs, tea sets, the variety and quality of tea, and ways of heating the water, as well as etiquette for drinking tea, and even teahouse waiters. Small square tables usually made of bamboo in teahouses are almost all uniformly as short as one's knee, so that when the customer sits in a typically rather low bamboo chair, he will find it convenient to pick up his teacup. The height of the chairs, the softness of the cushions, the width of the chair's back and the position of the chair's arms are all designed to ensure the highest degree of comfort.

The most preferred tea in Sichuan is jasmine tea which has to be brewed in covered teacups or porcelain teapots to maintain the rich fragrance and aroma characteristic of jasmine. However, to have the right kind of water is just as important as the tea itself. The Chinese classic work *The Book of Tea* says that to make tea, spring water is the best, followed by river water and finally well water. Having been filtered by rock and sand, spring water is clean and clear, making it the choicest water for brewing tea. Unfortunately, there are no springs in Chengdu. Teahouses in Chengdu in the past had to rely on river water. Of course some of the best establishments also used the water from the Xue Tao Well from which the legendary woman poet Xue Tao of the Tang Dynasty was said to have fetched water. The water first settled in a sandy jar before it was used. Today, most teahouses brew tea with tap water.

There are set rules and procedures for making tea in Sichuan. First, tea leaves are placed into the cup and a small amount of boiling water is poured in to let the leaves spread open and expand, a process called "fermenting the tea". Then more water is put in. The water has to be boiled quickly with high heat as opposed to slow heating on a gentle fire. The water has to be at boiling point and not at the point of already getting cold. The colder the water becomes, the more flavour will be



Smoking a long-stemmed pipe enhances the pleasure of tea drinking for this customer. The aroma of tobacco complements the fragrance of tea.



After supper, many loyal fans of particular performers go to enjoy their performances. These old folk artists entertain others as much as themselves (by Yuan Xuejun).



The story-teller is involved very much in the story he tells. Those off the stage refuse to leave the teahouse even for an instant as they do not want to miss a single word of the gripping tale being narrated.



Card reading is another way to while away the time in a teahouse.



The extraordinary skill of this waitress in pouring tea gives much inspiration to this artist (by Wang Dajun).

lost. There is the risk at the opposite extreme, however, for overheating the tea leaves with boiling water. To avoid this danger, the tea drinker has to gently remove the cover of the cup several times and put it squarely on after some heat has escaped from the cup. Only when the tea is made this way, will the fragrance that may drift away be kept within the cup.

Tea sets are also considered very important. This is why the so-called "tea of covered-cups" from Chengdu has become so famous. The covered teacup is also known as the "Three Essentials Cup", since the cover represents heaven, the cup mankind and the saucer the earth. In a way, the covered teacup represents a miniature universe. In fact, in this microcosm of sorts, the Sichuanese find endless entertainment and a timeless joy. They spend hours drinking, leaving everything else aside — at least as long as they sip the tea.

Covered Teacups and Brewing Techniques

Apart from its beautiful shape, the covered teacup has many functions, all carefully considered in the design. The large opening makes it easy to fill with water; the bottom of the cup in the shape of a funnel collects the leaves; the cover can be used to keep the leaves brewing, or release hot air or brush aside the leaves, as deemed appropriate by the user. The cover also helps the drinker regulate the tea to either strong or mild according to his taste: with the cup fully covered, the tea will be very strong; leave a small opening and the tea will change from mild to strong, but take the cover away and the tea will remain very mild and refreshing. Experienced tea drinkers like to move the cover in the cup several times so that they can smell the wonderful aroma of the tea for greater sensory gratification. The cover is also used to communicate. A fully covered cup means there is enough tea in the cup while an uncovered cup signifies a desire to add some more water.

Waiters in Sichuan teahouses have developed unique skills during the course of plying their trade. They can hold more than twenty cups and covers with the left hand and carry a shiny long-mouthed copper teapot in the right hand, all the while greeting guests and serving water. Before newly arrived guests sit down, the waiter has already neatly laid out on the table the right number of saucers. Then quickly, the covered cups are placed into the saucers. With his left hand, the waiter opens the cover and steadies it on one side of the cup to prevent water from splashing out, and with his right hand, he raises the teapot very high, aiming it at the cups and letting the boiling water fall squarely into the cup, spilling not a single drop. Then he puts the cover back on. This series of actions is skilfully executed almost instantaneously.

Thriving Teahouse Culture

Teahouses, of course, are not unique to Sichuan. The city of Hangzhou on the southern lower reaches of the Yangtse River for

example also offers an abundance of teahouses, where large tables for as many as eight and bamboo or cane chairs help maintain a degree of elegance. The inside of these teahouses is also decorated with scrolls with verse or couplets which visitors can appreciate while drinking tea. This literary flair gives these places a particular erudite and scholarly atmosphere. Sichuan teahouses, however, have a more lively ambience. For one thing, they stage more folk arts than teahouses anywhere else in the country.

Teahouse goes in Sichuan more often than not go there for some particular purposes. Apart from drinking tea, they go there to enjoy story-telling, *kuaiban* (rhythmic verses accompanied by bamboo clappers), ballad-singing and performances by players of the dulcimer and bamboo instruments. Teahouse goers believe Sichuan teahouses are a nurturing ground for folk arts as Sichuan folk arts were developed in the teahouses. Many artists — singers, instrumentalists and even some blind artists first became well-known after working the teahouse circuit. The different types of performers, tea drinkers and varied forms of folk arts together have created a colourful teahouse culture.

Most tea drinkers frequent teahouses because they have some leisure time on their hands. Some people, though, have to squeeze out some leisure time in order to enjoy the teahouse ambience. For those who opt to while away a considerable period of time in a teahouse, the cups continue to be filled without being charged extra.

In the past, people also went to the teahouses to sort out business affairs or disputes, or to "talk things over while having a cup of tea" as the locals say. For example, when they had some kind of a dispute, instead of settling it in court, they would rather go to a teahouse and try to solve it over a cup of tea. The teahouse management had only to count the number of cups used and wait to be paid by the side that lost the case at the end of arbitration. If both sides failed to reach an agreement, however, it would not be unusual for them to come to physical blows, or even throwing and smashing cups and saucers.

Teahouses in Sichuan also provide a venue for people from all walks of life to gather and discuss everything under the sun: current affairs, history, affairs of contemporary human life, business information, state policies and affairs, things native and foreign, and more. Old people come and take a nap. Young lovers come to have heart-to-heart talks. If someone has guests and yet his home does not have enough space, he may take his visitors to talk in a teahouse. In fact, many people visit teahouses just to talk and do not pay much attention to tea drinking. Not surprisingly, teahouses in Sichuan have become a window to a variety of kinds of information. Indeed, teahouses in Sichuan seem to be a microcosm of the entire province. If one wants to learn more about Sichuan, its people and its culture, one can just simply go to a teahouse so as to find out things and of course to taste the tea.

Translated by Huang Youyi



Between mouthfuls of tea, these patrons have their ears carefully picked.



Teahouses are ideal places for courting couples.



Apart from decorating the teahouse, these works of calligraphy and paintings also enhance the atmosphere of the setting.



Some teahouses in Sichuan are furnished with reclining chairs which can provide an unusual temptation for patrons.



A busy night scene at the "Hot Potted Landscape Hot-Pot Shop" in the Xinmen district of Chengdu



Signs of hot-pot shops can be seen even in the back streets in Chengdu and Chongqing (by Tian Jiemin).



Many hot-pot shops have private rooms (by Tian Jiemin).

Enjoying Hot-Pot Dishes on a Hot Summer Day

PHOTOS BY CHEN JIN TEXT BY YE NONG

My first impression on the cities in Sichuan is the overwhelming quantity of hot-pot restaurants. In Chongqing and Chengdu, whichever restaurant, food store or snack shop you go to, you would surely see advertisements of that particular establishment's hot-pot food. It is said that in the downtown area of Chongqing alone there are 600 hot-pot restaurants while in Chengdu, the number soars to 1,400. There are some differences in the preparation of Chengdu and Chongqing hot-pot dishes. The stress is on the cutting skills – in Chengdu, the ingredients are usually cut into strips; while in Chongqing, the ingredients are usually cut into large and thin slices.

It was typically scorching hot when I arrived at Chongqing. I was preparing to stay in the air-conditioned hotel room to escape the heat when my friends in the city insisted on inviting me to have a hot-pot meal. It made me practically sweat when I thought of eating the pungent and hot Sichuan dishes on an extremely hot day. But my friends claim hot-pot dishes are more tasty when eaten on torrid summer days.

So we went. When I entered a hot-pot restaurant, my eyes were nearly irritated to tears by a searing pungent waft. The manager led us to a table which was full of raw ingredients: various kinds of meat and vegetables.

Pungent and Savoury Hot-Pot in Chongqing

In the centre of the table is embedded a large pot, under which there is a lit kerosene stove. The pot is bisected by an S-shaped steel sheet, with pungent soup stock on one side and savoury beef soup stock on the other. The two parts of the pot, with soup of different colours, form an outline resembling a pair of mandarin ducks. No wonder the dish is also referred to by people in Sichuan as "Mandarin Ducks Hot-Pot Dish". In front of everyone of us there was a small plate of sesame oil with garlic paste, which was believed to reduce the fiery intensity of the dish. There were other hot and pungent seasonings for everyone to suit his own taste. The raw ingredients were truly exotic, including tripe, duck intestines, eel, loach, chicken and duck blood, pig's kidney, pig's brain, garlic shoots, slices of lotus root and Chinese cabbage. Each person chose what he wanted and added it to the boiling soup till it was done. Then it was eaten with the seasonings of one's choice.

The timing of boiling the food should be precise in that over-cooking makes it tough and less delicious, and under-cooking may result in rawness. Timing depends on experience to a very large extent.



The taste of the hot-pot dish depends on the preparation of the soup stock. Its chief ingredients are thick broad-bean sauce produced in Pixian County, fermented soya beans produced in Yongchuan County, finely-cut ginger, Chinese prickly ash, rock sugar and undiluted beef consommé.

An eye-catching sign of a simple and easy hot and pungent hot-pot shop ►

The simple and easy hot-pot dish is similar to the ordinary hot-pot dish yet the price is lower. Though the shop is simply furnished, the dish is popular among women and children. ▼




mature ginger. Pungency, hotness and delicate flavour characterize this dish, thus, it is popular in Chengdu. I made up my mind to have a try.

The shop I went to was located in an alley. On the advertisement on the front wall outside the shop were seven characters: "Heat, heat, heat, heat makes you comfortable" – a logical advertising pitch for this hot and pungent hot-pot dish.

The hot-pot shop was not large and was simply equipped, yet it was very clean. Vegetables in season which had been washed and cut were stuck together with a thin stick. Sticks with vegetables and other ingredients were put in different plates according to their prices. Other condiments included beef, pork, fish balls, duck intestines, fish fillets, dried bean-curd and so on. They were placed together on sticks respectively and clearly priced.

The preparation method and seasonings used were similar to those employed in making Chongqing's hot-pot dishes. There was a pot in the centre of the table. In front of each person there was a plate of hot pepper and Chinese prickly ash. I held the stick and boiled the ingredients in the red soup. Then I ate it without using chopsticks or a bowl.

When the diners have gone, the shopkeeper empties out the pot and then fills the pot with new soup stock. The soup is made from consommé. This hot-pot dish tastes similar to the ordinary hot-pot dish yet is far less expensive. It costs only a couple of yuan to satisfy your appetite.

When time comes to pay the bill, the shopkeeper calculates simply by counting the sticks that have been used. In this way, everyone knows on an ongoing basis the cost exactly and can avoid going beyond his budget when he is infatuated with a particularly delicious dish.  **Translated by Chen Jiaji**

I picked up a piece of tripe with chopsticks and dipped it into the pungent soup for a while. Then I ate it with some hot seasoning. At first it tasted tender and delicious, but after I had chewed it, tears began gushing out and my lips felt as though they suddenly became swollen. I then swallowed it at a gulp and drank some beer to cool off my mouth.

In fact, a cursory glance revealed that I was not the only one who could not bear the pungent and hot taste. Yet no one retired. Some snapped at chopsticks or wet towels to put up with the hot taste, while some drank beer to drown out the heat in their mouths just as I did. Sweating all over, a gentleman even went so far as to take off his shirt to cool his body and then went on eating. I ate and ate. The hotter the actual temperature of the dish was, the spicier and more delicious was its taste. I could not resist the temptation to indulge myself and several pieces later, although I sweated all over, nevertheless I felt refreshed like I had just finished a sauna bath.

Simple and Easy Hot and Pungent Hot-Pot Dishes in Chengdu

A few days later, I arrived at Chengdu. There I was told that a simple and easy hot-pot was being promoted recently. It differs from Chongqing's hot and pungent hot-pot in that its soup stock is stewed with such ingredients as hot pepper and



Appetizing ingredients and other necessities are ready.



It is very convenient to have the ingredients for the hot-pot stuck together on thin sticks.



He is so overwhelmed by the spicy dish that he does not seem to care about his demeanour in the presence of ladies.



The dish is too spicy and cold beer is a good antidote.



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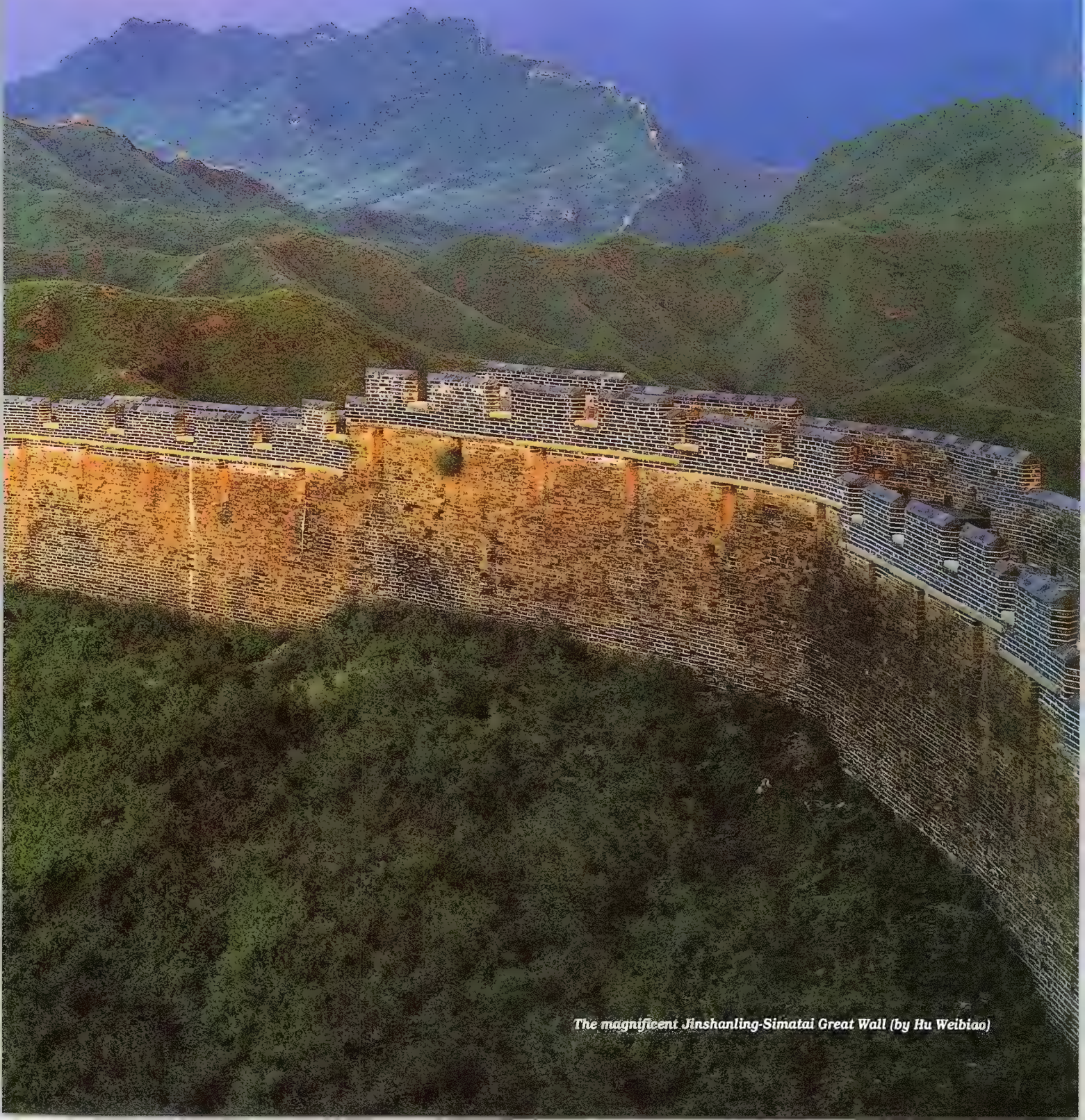
Capital Viewing Tower — the highest black tower on the entire length of the Great Wall



A Tour Around the Outskirts of Beijing

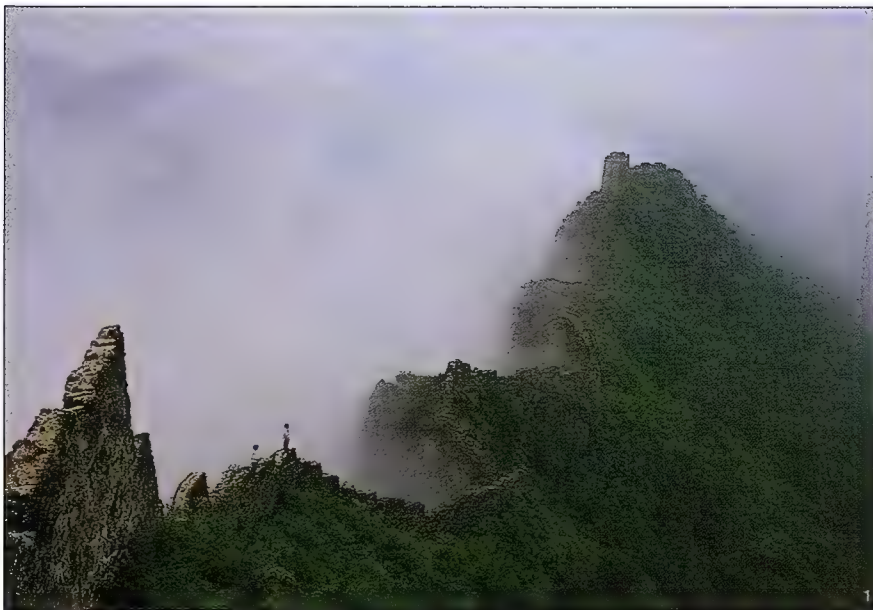
PHOTOS BY CHAN YAT NIN

ARTICLE BY HUA NIAN



The magnificent Jinshanling-Simatai Great Wall (by Hu Weibiao)

The Celestial Bridge and Fairy Tower at the Simatai Great Wall once occupied a strategic position.



A fire is needed to dispel the cold in the Fairy Tower.

“Why not tour the outer suburbs of Beijing?” I finally got the idea after having visited Beijing many times. As an ancient capital city, Beijing boasts an abundance of scenic spots and historical sites. Most people know about the famous section of the Great Wall at Badaling, the Ming Tombs and the Summer Palace in its suburbs but neglect visiting the many other places of interest.

The last time I went to Beijing, I obtained a tourist map of Beijing's suburbs which, to my surprise, clearly indicated the tourist attractions in Mentougou District, Fangshan District, Shijingshan District, Haidian District and Fengtai District, as well as those in Yanqing, Changping, Huairou, Miyun and Pinggu Counties. With the help of a friend working in the tourism department, I worked out three routes and started my tour around the outskirts of Beijing.

Asia's Largest Man-Made Lake

Our car sped past Shunyi County and Miyun County. Soon we reached Miyun Reservoir, which is believed to be the largest artificial lake in Asia. I gazed at the surface of the lake on the left of the road. The water was so clear and vast, it veritably looked like a sea.

Miyun Reservoir lies among the high peaks of the Yanshan Mountains, with a water area of 18,800 hectares and a capacity 67 times greater than that of the Ming Tombs Reservoir. Miyun Reservoir has been developed into a tourist site with many scenic spots surrounding it. To its

north lies the beautiful Yunfeng (Cloud Peak) Mountain, to its west is the Tianxian (Goddess) Waterfall known as the capital's foremost waterfall, to its southwest the Miyun International Amusement Park, and to its east the Bailong (White Dragon) Pool. However, as my time was limited, I could not visit all these scenic spots. After having saluted the Miyun Reservoir, I sped on to the Great Wall at Jinshanling and Simatai in the northeast.

The Great Wall's Greatest Concentration of Block Towers

The section of the Great Wall at Jinshanling and Simatai lies on the high mountains about one hundred kilometres from Beijing at the border between Miyun County in Beijing and Luanping County in Hebei Province. It is the most representative part of the Great Wall built in the Ming Dynasty (1368-1644). According to historical records, in 1567, the first year of the reign of Emperor Longqing, the famous army commanders Qi Jiguang (1528-1587) and Tan Lun (1520-1577) led troops to construct the Great Wall and in five years completed this 1,000-kilometre section between Shanhaiguan Pass in the east and Bianxi (present-day Changping County in Beijing) in the west. It is the most crucial section of the wall constructed at that time.

Our car followed the Beijing-Chengde Highway through Gubeikou in Miyun County and turned southeast at Bakeshiying in Luanping

County. After a while we reached the foot of the Great Wall at Jinshanling. After I ascended the wall, I saw steep mountains rising one higher than the other and the Great Wall winding its way like a snake along the ridges of the undulating peaks. It was a splendid panorama to behold.

A feature of the wall here is the great number of block towers, especially when compared with the Great Wall at Badaling, which commands almost all the strategic positions in the area. Along this 25-kilometre stretch are over 140 block towers, such a concentration of which cannot be found in other sections of the Great Wall.

These block towers are ingeniously constructed in different shapes and styles: square, round, oblate, some with a flat roof, some with a roof like a boat's awning and some with a vaulted roof. The particular one we inspected has a horse track directly beneath it. On either side of the track are parapet walls with arrow slits, look-outs and spouts projecting out. Every ten paces along the track lies a pile of rocks resembling rolling logs. These were weapons used in ancient times to fight intruding enemies, and together with the precipitous mountains and the imposing wall create a magnificent scene.

It was very quiet here. Standing on the mottled wall, I was quickly overcome by nostalgia, much more quickly than I was at the Great Wall in Badaling which is usually crowded with visitors.

Three Routes for Beijing's Suburban Tours

NORTHEAST

Mutianyu Great Wall

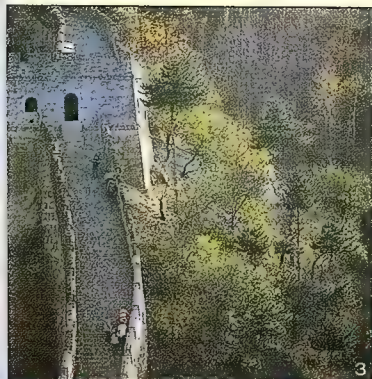
Located at Mutianyu Village in Huairou County, 70 kilometres from the city proper, this section of the Great Wall was built during the Ming Dynasty (1368-1644). Both sides of the wall are densely dotted with sentinels and block towers. Cablecars and other facilities to scale and view the wall are conveniently provided.

Transportation: Take a long-distance bus from Dongzhimen or a special coach from Qianmen to this place.

No. 1 Waterfall in Beijing Area

Located at Shicheng, Miyun County approximately 100 kilometres from the city proper, this fall with a big

Mutianyu Great Wall is built by the steep cliff (by Wang Wenbo).



drop offers a magnificent view. In winter when the water is frozen, it becomes an ice cascade.

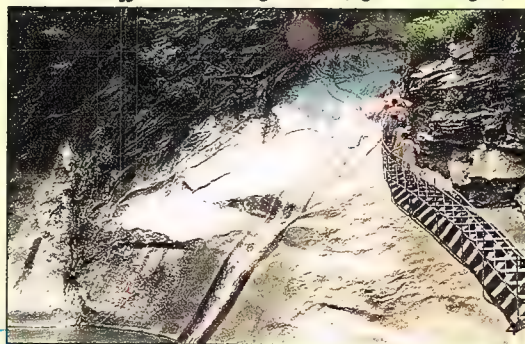
Transportation: From Dongzhimen take a long-distance bus to Miyun, change to the bus bound for Sihetang and get off at Zhangjiafen, or book the Xizhimen-Shatong train and alight at Shitanglu Station. During peak tourist seasons, there are express coaches from Xizhimen to this site.

Tianxian (Goddess) Falls

Lying in Sihetang Village in Miyun County, 115 kilometres from the city proper, there are eight waterfalls, large and small. Among them the Wangxian (Goddess Viewing) Fall, the Jingxian (Alarmed Goddess) Fall and the Jiexian (Greeting Goddess) Fall are a cascade in three folds with a drop of over 300 metres. Nearby there are also twelve big and small pools which offer attractive scenery.

Transportation: Take a long-distance bus from Dongzhimen to Miyun, change to the bus for Sihetang, then proceed to the spot by chartered cars or vans.

The sheer cliff at Black Dragon Pool (by Gao Guangde)



Yunfeng (Cloud Peak) Mountain

Located at Bulaotun Village in Miyun County 120 kilometres from the city centre, this spot features beautiful natural mountain landscapes. Some ruins of ancient temples and cliffside carvings are still standing.

Transportation: From Dongzhimen to Miyun take a long-distance bus and change to the bus for Yanluo, or book the Xizhimen-Shatong train and disembark at Huangtukan Station.

Bailong (White Dragon) Pool

Located at Taishitun Village thirty kilometres north of the county seat of Miyun, the White Dragon Pool is formed by the convergence of several mountain springs. The waters overflowing from the major body of water form three smaller cascading pools. In this area one can visit temples, memorial halls and other architectural structures built during the Song, Yuan, Ming and Qing Dynasties.

Transportation: Take a long-distance bus from Dongzhimen to Miyun and change to a bus to Huangtuwo; book the Beijing-Chengde train to Miyun and change to a bus for the destination.

Simatai Great Wall

Standing in the mountainous area in northern Miyun County, the Simatai Great Wall is 100 kilometres from the city proper. This section of the Great Wall built during the Ming Dynasty is the essence of the whole architectural structure. A lake formed by cold springs and hot springs at the foot of the wall provides a venue for boating (picture 1).

Transportation: Take a long-distance bus from Dongzhimen to Miyun and change to the bus bound for Dongzhuanghe, from where a special bus then proceeds to the site.

Yaoqiaoyu Tourist Area

Located at the easternmost reaches of Miyun County and east of the Simatai Great Wall, this tourist area is hidden within dense forests and clear streams in a deep quiet valley (picture 6). On its left is the Miyun Hunt-

ing and Tourist Area featuring meandering mountain chains and peaks (picture 5). Near the entrance to the gorge stands the Fortress Village (picture 7) facing the Great Wall.

Transportation: Take a long-distance bus from Dongzhimen to Miyun and transfer to the bus to Xinchengzi Village located at the entrance to the gorge.



Yaoqiaoyu Hunting Ground provides a manoeuvring stage for hunting aficionados.



Lucid springs are ubiquitous in the deep valley at Yaoqiaoyu Tourist Area (by Wang Wenbo).



A village of several dozen households has been formed at the site of the ancient fortress at the foot of the Great Wall.

In the cinema with a 360-degree encircling screen at the Badaling Great Wall, one can enjoy the magnificent views of the Great Wall from Shanhaiguan Pass to Jiayuguan Pass.



It is great fun to ride a horse on the Kangxi Grassland (by Wang Wenbo).

Capital Viewing Tower

The Great Wall at Jinshanling and the Great Wall at Simatai actually refer to the same section of the wall, which runs from Jinshanling at Gubeikou in the west to the mountain peak on the eastern side of the Simatai Reservoir in the east. This section is customarily known as the Jinshanling Great Wall at Jinshanling, and at Simatai it is known as the Simatai Great Wall. Different views are perceived at each place.

At the eastern end of the Great Wall at Simatai there is a block tower on the highest peak known as Capital Viewing Tower. To reach the tower, we had to leave Jinshanling to return to Gubeikou, taking the road on the southern side of the mountain.

However, it is no easy matter to get to the tower, for it stands at the summit of the Beida Mountain rising more than nine hundred metres above sea level. The mountain is very precipitous and difficult to climb. We stopped at Xinchengzi Town and made preparations before it was dark. We found two local guides and bought some food, drinking water, flashlights and raincoats.

The next morning we started off before day-break at five o'clock. When we reached the Tang Family Village two kilometres away from Xinchengzi, we left the car and proceeded on foot. After passing a rocky slope, we came to a sheer mountain, the Beida Mountain, which loomed before us like a huge wall itself. We climbed along the protruding rocks of the mountain with difficulty. Fortunately, our guides helped us with our heavy photographic equipment. They also supported us as we climbed. With their assistance, we finally reached a block

tower on top of the mountain. From there we saw the Capital Viewing Tower looming large, rising into the clouds.

The wall here has not been repaired and its original features remain intact, giving us a sense of the wall's unique antiquity. The wall was built at the edge of a fault along the mountain ridges. Inside the wall were a group of low hills. The soaring Beida Mountain Range intercepted the inside and outside of the Great Wall, dividing it into two different worlds. Outside the wall clouds rolled, but inside it there was not even the slightest hint of cloud. The Great Wall is such a formidable barrier, it seemed that even clouds dared not to drift any further. It was early summer, so we wore unlined clothes. Standing on the wall, however, we soon shivered with cold.

The tower is a square block tower with no doors. We scaled it using holes in the walls. In ancient times soldiers would climb it using a ladder. When they were up the tower, they withdrew the ladder, so the tower became a bastion they would defend to the last. From the top of the tower on the night of a festival when the weather is fine, one can see the distant glimmer of fireworks in Beijing.

Like Walking a Tightrope

Suddenly the western section of the wall appeared from behind the drifting clouds. The wide wall now became so narrow here until it became the width of a brick and allowed just one person to pass at a time. Our guides showed to us how to negotiate such a narrow passage all the way to Simatai. They advanced step by step towards the distant block tower, crawling at places where there were stairs. We

had our hearts in our mouths watching them. This block tower had a beautiful name, the "Fairy Tower". But we did not know whether it was named for its unique shape or for the exquisite scenery of this section of the wall.

The mountain ridge was sheer like a sharp knife. There seemed no place for such a structure as the wall. Normally, precipitous mountains like this were natural barriers in themselves. Why should a wall have been built here? At the foot of the mountain there was a tunnel and a valley lay between the Capital Viewing Tower and the Fairy Tower. This valley represented terrain any intruding enemy could take. If a wall was built at a commanding position, it would become a place where "if one man guards the pass, ten thousand would be unable to get through," as an old saying goes.

Ancient Fortress Village

The section of the Great Wall in Xinchengzi not only features many block towers and occupies a strategic position but also boasts an ancient fortress village which has been discovered just recently by the outside world. This discovery is the reason why the place has become a hot tourist attraction.

After we left Xinchengzi, our car turned towards Yaoqiaoyu in the northeast and found the ancient fortress.

The fortress has a six-metre-high surrounding wall constructed of rocks with only one entrance gate. Within it live several dozen households of farmers. Crops were grown atop the surrounding wall. Opposite the fortress is Yunyou Valley, a scenic spot renowned for its waterfalls and springs. But what fascinated me

NORTHWEST

Mount Miaofeng Scenic Area

With an altitude of 1,290 metres at the northern tip of Mentougou District, this scenic area is about 45 kilometres from the city proper. Interesting tourist attractions here include a 27-hectare rose garden, Qiying Temple, Niangniang Temple and other ancient architectural structures on the top of the mountain. The Niangniang Temple Fair held every year from the first to the fifteenth day of the fourth lunar month is a grand event attracting people from all over northern China.

At present there is no express bus service to this site. Visitors can go west along the Yongding River to Danli Road North and turn north in a chartered vehicle.

Juyongguan Pass (Yuntai Terrace)

Lying in Changping County sixty kilometres from the city proper, Juyongguan Pass, one of the nine forts on the Great Wall in ancient times, was first built in 368. In the pass tower there is the exquisitely carved white marble Yuntai Terrace originally dating from 1345 (picture 5).

Visitors can take the Beijing-Zhangjiakou train and get off at Juyongguan Station to this site.

Badaling Great Wall

Standing north of Juyongguan Pass this is the earliest section of the Great Wall developed

The verdant Longqing Gorge is the site for the annual ice lantern festival in winter (by Liu Wenmin).



An archaeological tour has been launched in Yanqing.

for tourism. Beneath the Great Wall there is a 360-degree grand screen cinema (picture 1) for visitors to enjoy the views of the Great Wall from the Shanhaiguan Pass at its eastern end in Hebei Province to its western terminus at Jiayuguan Pass in Gansu.

Transportation is the same as that to Juyongguan Pass, but one should alight at Badaling Station.

Kangxi Grassland

Situated by the Guanting Reservoir west of Kangzhuang in Yanqing County, the grassland is 80 kilometres from Beijing's urban area, stretching along the shores of a lake. When summer comes, the 2,000-hectare grassland is like a huge carpet of green grass. Then, visitors can enjoy the splendour of the grassland on horseback or swim in the lake nearby (picture 2).

Transportation: Take a bus from the Beijiao Market Bus Terminus to Yanqing, then change to the bus bound for Kangzhuang. From Kangzhuang, a 3.5-kilometre walk to the west brings you to the Kangxi Grassland. Alternatively, one can take the Beijing-Baotou train from Xizhimen Railway Station to Kangzhuang and then walk 3.5 kilometres to the west.

Groups of ancient pagodas can be seen everywhere at Iron-Walled Silver Mountain (by Wang Miao).



The golf links near the Ming Tomb Reservoir (by Huang Yunsheng)

Longqing Gorge

Located in northern Yanqing County about eighty kilometres from the urban area, Longqing Gorge boasts a reservoir on Jiqu Mountain. In winter, an annual ice lantern festival is held here (picture 3).

Transportation: An express long-distance bus is available at Beijiao Market.

The Ming Tombs

Located within Changping County, some fifty kilometres from the city proper, thirteen emperors of the Ming Dynasty are interred here. With elegant streams and green mountains covered with ancient pine trees the tomb area features many large stone carvings as well as an underground palace.

There are two principal routes to the Ming Tombs: Take Bus 345 from Deshengmen to Changping, then change to Bus 314 and go to Qikongqiao. An express bus from Beijiao Market also goes to the Ming Tombs.

Complex of Ancient Pagodas

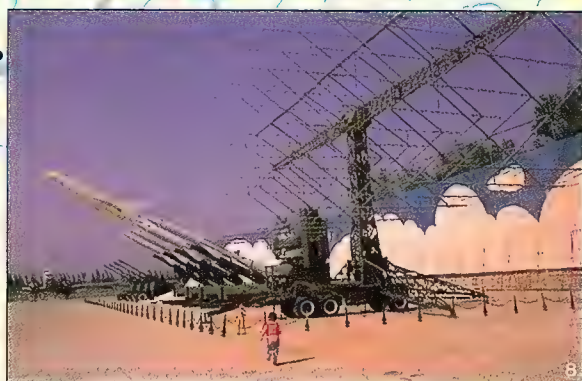
Located seven kilometres northeast of the Ming Tombs is a mountain with very steep cliffs known as Iron-walled Silver Mountain because its colour resembles iron and its snow-clad silvery peak in winter. The main attraction in the mountain is the complex of pagodas scattered all over the slopes dating from the Jin (1115-1234) and Yuan (1271-1368) periods (picture 4).

China Aviation Museum

It is China's first large museum dedicated to aviation and is built beneath Greater Tangshan Mountain in Changping County. The museum boasts a collection of 160 aircraft of ninety various types and more than 600 aviation and air defence weapons, many of which are rare in world aviation circles (picture 8).

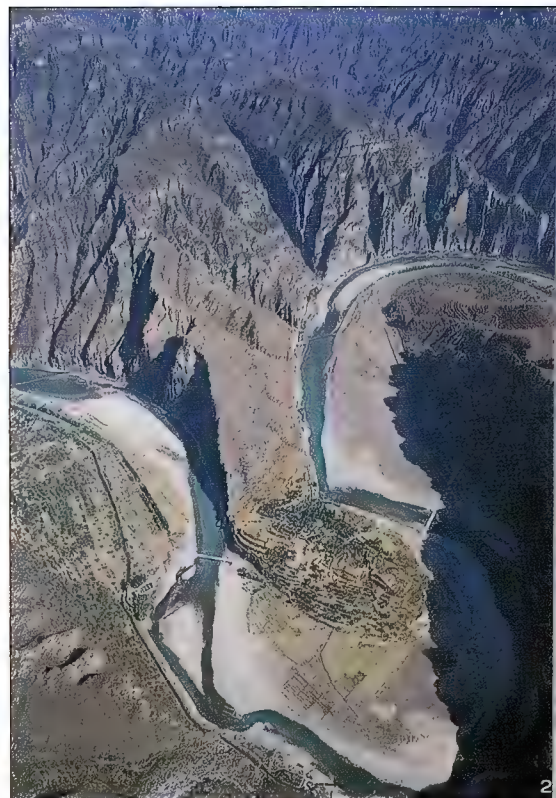
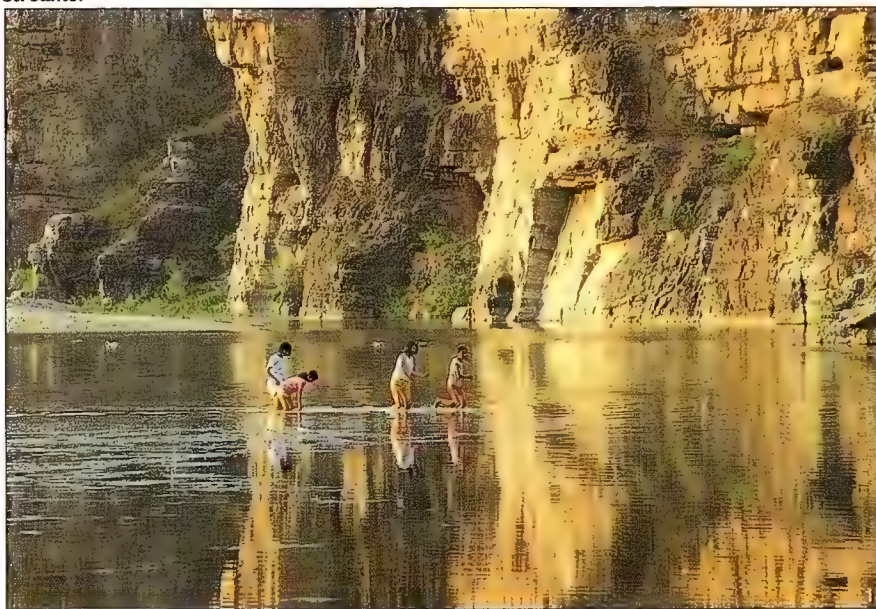
Transportation: It is accessible by long-distance bus from Beijiao Market to Lesser Tangshan Mountain and Qincheng.

Yuntai Terrace at Juyongguan Pass is in itself a stone carving masterpiece.



The China Aviation Museum has a collection of varied aircraft and air defence weapons.

The topography of the Tenth Ford is characterized by the harmony of mountains and streams.



An untamed flavour is provided by the green mountains and winding streams at the Tenth Ford (by Hu Weibiao).

most here was the tourist hunting ground on the slopes above the valley. As the only "hunters" present we enjoyed ourselves for a while in the wild forest.

"Excavating Ancient Tombs" in Yanqing County

After having travelled several days along the northeastern tour route, I returned to Beijing and rested for a night. Then I started my tour along the western route. It so chanced that "an archaeological tour" had been organized to enable tourists to participate in excavations in Yanqing County on the northwestern outskirts of Beijing.

In Yanqing, a large number of ancient tombs dating from the late Neolithic Period have been discovered and a simple museum of these finds was also there. But in museums there are always signs like "Don't touch the exhibits". It is not sufficiently stimulating for visitors to only see with their eyes; what is more enriching is to touch. So the local people reburied some previously unearthed ancient objects of little archaeological value and let tourists excavate with their own hands.

By following the method taught by archaeologists, we first looked for potential burial sites and then started digging cautiously with small shovels, bamboo picks and brushes. It gave us a fright when a skeleton was exposed. But our fear was soon replaced by joy as many objects such as jade ware and porcelains buried with the dead were found.

In the end I was awarded a replica of a cultural relic for my outstanding work in the "excavation".

Riding Horses on the Kangxi Grassland

In the suburbs of Beijing there is a large grassland — the Kangxi Grassland in Yanqing County.

We started from Yanqing County Town, and a one-hour drive brought us to the Kangxi Grassland. From the distance we saw the flat grassland covered with lush green grass. Many people from the city were amusing themselves there by riding horses. Local farmers drive their horses there to rent to the visitors. If you cannot ride, they will teach you or lead the horse for you; if you are a rider, you can rent a horse and gallop around the grassland. If you prefer to ascend the viewing tower in the middle of the grassland, you can gain a commanding view of the Guanting Reservoir at the westernmost end. We each rented a horse and went gallivanting for some time. However, since we had planned to visit the stone carvings on the Yuntai Terrace at Juyongguan Pass near Badaling, we did not stay for the bonfire party held that night for visitors and the lodgement in the Mongolian tents in the grassland holiday camp.

Aviation Museum in a Mountain Cave

On our way back from the northwest tour route, we passed the road leading to the Ming

Tombs and found Asia's largest aviation museum. Although it has been open for only three years, the museum has become one of the biggest tourist attractions in Beijing.

The aviation museum consists of two main parts: an open exhibition centre and a mountain. At the exhibition centre are displayed various types of aircraft, radar, guided missiles and air defence weapons. The aircraft range from miniature planes to heavy-duty bombers. Apart from military aircraft, there are a variety of planes designed for civilian use as well as those Chinese leaders used to take. But the best of the exhibits are concealed inside the mountain.

Originally, this mountain was an air force base. In order to conceal the aircraft, the mountain was hollowed out to form a large hangar. The hangar has now been converted into a large exhibition hall unsupported by pillars. It is so large, we had to take an electric car to go round it. An elegant lady from the air force served as our guide and driver. She explained to us in detail the origin, features and history of the outstanding service of each aircraft. Some of the planes are rarities not seen in other parts of the world. The visit was an enlightening experience for us.

The Tomb of the Western Han Prince Yan

Once back in Beijing after following the northwestern route, I immediately embarked on the southwestern tour route, along which are two famous places of historical interest: the mu

Site of Peking Man at Zhoukoudian

Located in Longgu (Dragon Bone) Hill in Fangshan District about fifty kilometres southwest of the urban area, this site features limestone caves in which Peking Man once lived 500,000 years ago. Displayed in the Museum of Peking Man here are human and animal fossils as well as other specimens and models.

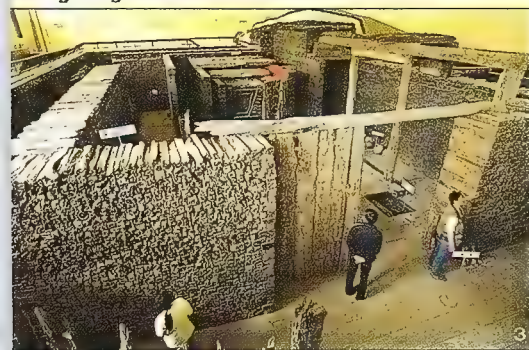
Transportation: Take the Tianqiao-Fangshan or Lianhuachi-Fangshan long-distance bus and alight at Zhoukoudian. An alternative route is the Yongdingmen-Zhoukoudian Railway.

Yunshui (Cloud Water) Cave

Located south of Fangshan District and some sixty kilometres from the city centre, Yunshui Cave is an intricate cave with many historical relics. The cave is in the western side of Mount Shangfang. Some 600 metres in depth, it is covered with stalactites taking myriad forms.

Transportation: From Tianqiao or Lianhuachi take a long-distance bus to Fangshan, then change to the bus bound from Shengshuiyu. Alternatively, take the Beijing-Taiyuan train from Yongdingmen Railway Station and alight at Gushankou and then proceed north on foot.

Much can be learned about the burial system for nobility from the well-preserved Dabaotai Western Han Dynasty Tomb and its museum.



The David's Deer Garden at Tuanhe Imperial Summer Palace, once a deer hunting ground (by Wang Miao)

Yunju Temple

Standing at the foot of Mount Shijing about 75 kilometres from the urban centre in the southwestern suburbs of Beijing, Yunju Temple is one of the biggest temples in the area of Beijing. Stored within the temple are 14,277 stelae of Buddhist sutras containing about 17 million characters (picture 5).

Transportation: Take a long-distance bus from Tianqiao or Lianhuachi to Fangshan and then transfer to the bus going to Nanshangle. From there walk north to the temple. Or take the Beijing-Taiyuan train from Yongdingmen Railway Station and get off at Dongyusi.

Shidu (Tenth Ford) Scenic Area

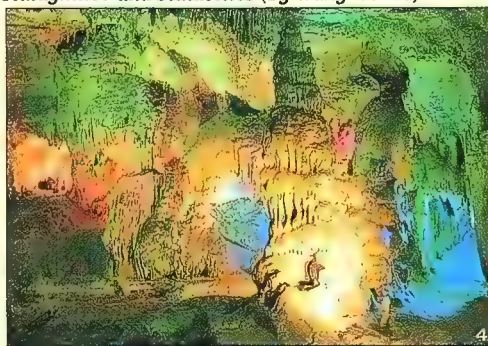
About 100 kilometres from the urban area, this scenic area is situated at the upper and middle reaches of the Juma River in the southwestern part of Fangshan District. The verdant 15-kilometre valley is popularly known by the locals as the "Lesser Guilin in Beijing" (pictures 1 and 2).

Transportation: An express long-distance bus from Tianqiao or Lianhuachi takes one to the vicinity of Shidu. Alternatively, take the Beijing-Taiyuan train from Yongdingmen Railway Station and alight at Shidu.

Jietai Monastery

Also known as Jietan Monastery, this temple is located at the foot of the Ma'an Mountain in Men-

The Stone Flower Cave is full of grotesque stalagmites and stalactites (by Wang Wenbo).



tougou District, 35 kilometres from the city centre. Founded during the Tang Dynasty (618-907) most of the buildings date from the Qing Dynasty. Apart from the temple structures, there are five old pine trees in the temple complex which have been celebrated in poems (picture 7).

Transportation: Take Bus 336 from Zhanlan Road to Hetan and change to the bus bound for the Tanzhe Monastery and get off at Jietaisi. Or take a special coach from Qianmen during the tourist season.

Dabaotai Han Dynasty Tomb

Located at Huangtugang in Fengtai District, 15 kilometres from the urban area, this tomb belongs to the Western Han Dynasty (206 B.C. - A.D. 24). From it a great number of exquisitely made jade artifacts have been unearthed. Restored painted carriages and coffins are on display here (picture 3).

Transportation: First take a bus to Lugouqiao, and from there take a van to Lugouqiao Village and walk east.

Shihua (Stone Flower) Cave

This cave is in Fangshan District about 55 kilometres from the city proper. In the cave one finds grotesque stone formations resembling flowers and curtains as well as stalagmites and stalactites (picture 4).

Transportation: Take a bus from Tianqiao to Fangshan, change to the bus bound for Bangezhuang and alight at the crossing at Cijiaju. Another bus route starts from Lianhuachi to Shihuichang. Alternatively, book the Beijing-Taiyuan train from Yongdingmen, get off at Nanguancun, and walk northward to the cave.

Stone carvings of the Buddha at Yunju Temple (by Wang Miao)



Buddhist statue and altar in Jietai Temple (by Wang Wenbo)



Bronze decorative artifact for the carriage unearthed from Shang and Zhou Dynasty ruins at Liulihe

Autumn is the best season for a tour to the Fragrant Hills when mountain slopes are tinted crimson by maple leaves (by Wang Wenbo).



The Jingang Pagoda at Azure Cloud Temple is shrouded in green groves (by Wang Wenbo).

seum of the Western Han Tomb at Dabaotai in Fengtai District and the ancient site of Shang and Zhou Culture at Liulihe in Fangshan District. I decided to spend more than half a day visiting the more remote Liulihe.

Liulihe is said to be where the capital of the State of Yan in the Warring States Period (475-221 B.C.) was located. Although it is difficult to find the actual site of the Yan capital, part of the Yan city wall ruins resembling a bank of earth is still visible in the fields. There is also a group of Shang and Zhou Dynasty tombs, including the tombs of nobles and pits containing carriages and horses buried with the dead. A large number of exquisitely fashioned bronzes have been unearthed from these tombs as well. In the past I had thought that all the antiques preserved in Beijing were from the three dynasties which had the city as their capital, namely the Yuan, Ming and Qing; I never realized there were so many fine cultural relics belonging to much remoter ages.

Then I headed towards the Western Han Tomb at Dabaotai, where an even deeper impression would be left on me.

This ancient tomb is four metres below the ground. Its original structure is well preserved, although a museum has been constructed above it. The chamber of the tomb, about forty metres long, has a double winding corridor built of rectangular wood blocks and a five-tier coffin hall in the centre. In ancient times only a prince could have been interred in such an extravagant manner. It is said that only two tombs with such a burial system have been found in China (the other being in Yangzhou). The tomb had been plundered in the past, but nevertheless a great number of cultural relics were still found. The

finds verified that the tomb belonged to Prince Yan of the Western Han Dynasty.

The Tenth Ford or "Lesser Guilin"

Along the southwestern tour route there are many other places of interest such as Tanzhe (Pool and Cudrania) Temple which is older than the city of Beijing, the sites of Peking Man and Upper Cave Man at Zhoukoudian, Jietai (Ordination Terrace) Temple, Yunju (Cloud Gathering) Temple and the Wanfo (Ten Thousand Buddha) Hall. I omitted all these places but chose another one — the Tenth Ford.

Known as the "Lesser Guilin" in the suburbs of Beijing, the Tenth Ford is located at the southwestern end of Beijing's Fangshan District near the border between Lajshui and Yixian Counties in Hebei Province in the Taihang Mountain Range. The Juma River which rises from the Taihang Mountains runs along a winding course through the precipitous high peaks. If you go upstream, you must cross the river at each bend, and these bends are named the First Ford, the Second Ford, the Third Ford on up through the Tenth Ford. If you advance yet further, you will find the Eleventh Ford, the Twelfth Ford, and so on.

After our car turned northwest at Zhangfang Town, we entered a river valley between high mountains. It seemed there was no way through the valley; the view was completely obstructed by the mountains. But as we turned a bend, a more beautiful scene greeted us.

When we reached the Fifth and Sixth Fords, the mountains became even higher, with sheer peaks projecting up like so many swords. The

swiftly running Juma River formed into sluggish deep pools at the foot of these sheer cliffs with their towering peaks reflected in the clear water. Is this the "Lesser Guilin"? I asked myself. Guilin's mountains and rivers are striking, but they are not quite so rough and rugged as the mountains and rivers here.

At the Ninth and Tenth Fords, the mountains loom so menacingly tall and huge that they seemed they would topple down in the valley at any moment. We lodged in a hotel at the Ninth Ford and made preparations for climbing the mountains the following day.

A Panorama of Mountains

Early the next morning, before the mist dispersed, we started off to climb the Reclining Camel Mountain. People usually find a way up this precipitous mountain from a degraded gully, if there is any. The gully we found is not very steep, it is not as terrible as the front side of the mountain.

Once on top of the mountain, without waiting to regain our breath, we dashed to the precipice at the summit to get a view. From here we saw the Juma River running like a snake in the gorge, undulating mountains on either side stretching endlessly into the distance with peaks seeming to rise one higher than the other, and a few small villages surrounded by farmlands dotting the valley.

We had our lunch at a farmer's home at the Seventh Ford. After the meal, our host took us back to the hotel at the Ninth Ford in a horse-drawn cart. Sitting in the cart I felt deeply appreciative of the hospitality extended by these honest mountain folk.

Translated by Xiong Zhenru

THE ENVIRONS OF BEIJING

Ruins of Yuanmingyuan

Occupying an area of 346 hectares in Haidian District, Yuanmingyuan, once the imperial garden of the Qing Dynasty, known as the garden of gardens in its time, was burnt down by combined Anglo-French forces in 1860.

Transportation: Take Bus 332 from the Beijing Zoo to Zhongguancun and change to Bus 365 to the site. Or take Bus 375 from the Summer Palace to Yuanmingyuan. Another option is Bus 331 from Xizhimen.

Badachu Park

Located on the tops of Cuiwei Hill, Pingpo Hill and Lushi Hill at the eastern foot of Xishan or the Western Hills, the park, famed as the forest garden, houses eight temples built during the Sui, Tang and following dynasties. The most famous is the Lingguang Monastery.

Transportation: One route is to take Bus 347 from the Beijing Zoo directly to this site; another is to board Bus 311 from Pingguoyuan to Badachu Middle School.

Xiangshan (Fragrant Hills) Park

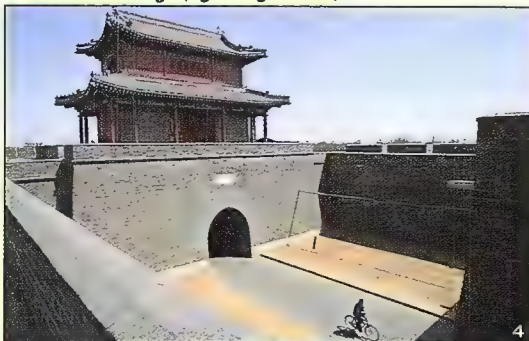
Situated approximately twenty kilometres from the city proper, this park is a beautiful scenic spot composed of natural landscapes, ancient temples and an imperial garden. The most renowned site is called Red Leaves in the Fragrant Hills. Autumn is actually the best season to visit this place (picture 1).

Transportation: Same as to the Beijing Botanical Garden described later.

Mural in Fahai Temple (by Wang Wenbo)



The ancient city of Wanping in the vicinity of the Marco Polo Bridge (by Wang Wenbo)



"The Moon at Daybreak over Marco Polo Bridge" is one of the scenic spots in the Beijing area.



The novelist Cao Xueqin's former residence is now the site of his Memorial Hall (by Wang Miao).

Lugouqiao (Marco Polo Bridge)

Located 20 kilometres southwest of the urban area, Beijing's oldest surviving stone multiple-arch bridge was first built during the Jin Dynasty and was marvelled at by Marco Polo. Constructed with white marble stones, it was one of the ancient "Eight Scenes in the Capital of Yan". This is also the site of the conflagration of the War of Resistance Against Japan (1937-1945) (picture 4).

Transportation: Take Bus 6 from the city proper to Liuliqiao, then change to Bus 339 and alight at Lugouqiao Stop. Or take Bus 48 from Qianmen to Tianningsi, transfer to Bus 309 and proceed to the bridge.

Tanzhe Monastery

Located in front of Baozhu (Treasure Pearl) Peak on Tanzhe Mountain in Mentougou District, some 45 kilometres from the urban area, Tanzhe Monastery was first built during the Jin Dynasty (265-420) (picture 5).

Transportation: Take Bus 336 from Zhanlan Road to Hetan Long-distance Bus Terminus at Mentougou and then change to the bus bound for the monastery. Another route is to take the special tourist coaches from Qianmen during the peak tourist seasons.

Beijing Botanical Garden

Covering sixty hectares between Yuquan (Jade Spring) Hill and the Fragrant Hills, this garden has a collection of more than 3,000 species of rare plants. It is the largest botanical garden in northern China.

Transportation: Bus 332 from the Beijing Zoo Terminus brings you to the Summer Palace where one can change to Bus 333 and get off at Wofo (Reclining Buddha) Temple. Bus 360 from the Beijing Zoo also runs to Wofo Temple, and Bus 318 from Pingguoyuan represents yet another route to the garden.

Biyun (Azure Cloud) Temple

Built on the eastern slope of the Fragrant Hills during the Ming Dynasty, this temple contains Tianwang Hall, Arhat Hall, Dr. Sun Yat-sen Memorial Hall and Jingang Throne Pagoda (picture 2).

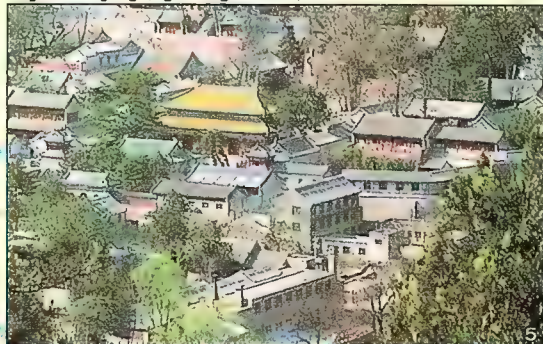
Transportation: Same as to the Beijing Botanical Garden.

Wofo (Reclining Buddhas) Temple and Cao Xueqin Memorial Hall

Located on the southern slope of Shou'an Hill north of the Western Hills, this site is some thirty kilometres from the city centre. The ancient temple houses a bronze reclining Buddha 25 tons in weight and 5.2 metres in length (picture 8). A short distance east of the temple is Cao Xueqin Memorial Hall established within the former residence of Cao Xueqin, author of the famous Chinese classic *A Dream of Red Mansions* (picture 7).

Transportation: Same as to the Beijing Botanical Garden.

The Tanzhe Monastery temple complex was built before Beijing (by Wang Wenbo).



The 5.2-metre-long bronze Reclining Buddha in Wofo Temple is impressive (by Wang Miao).



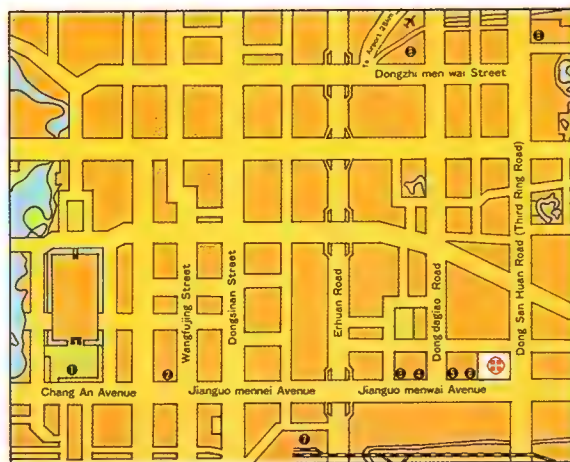
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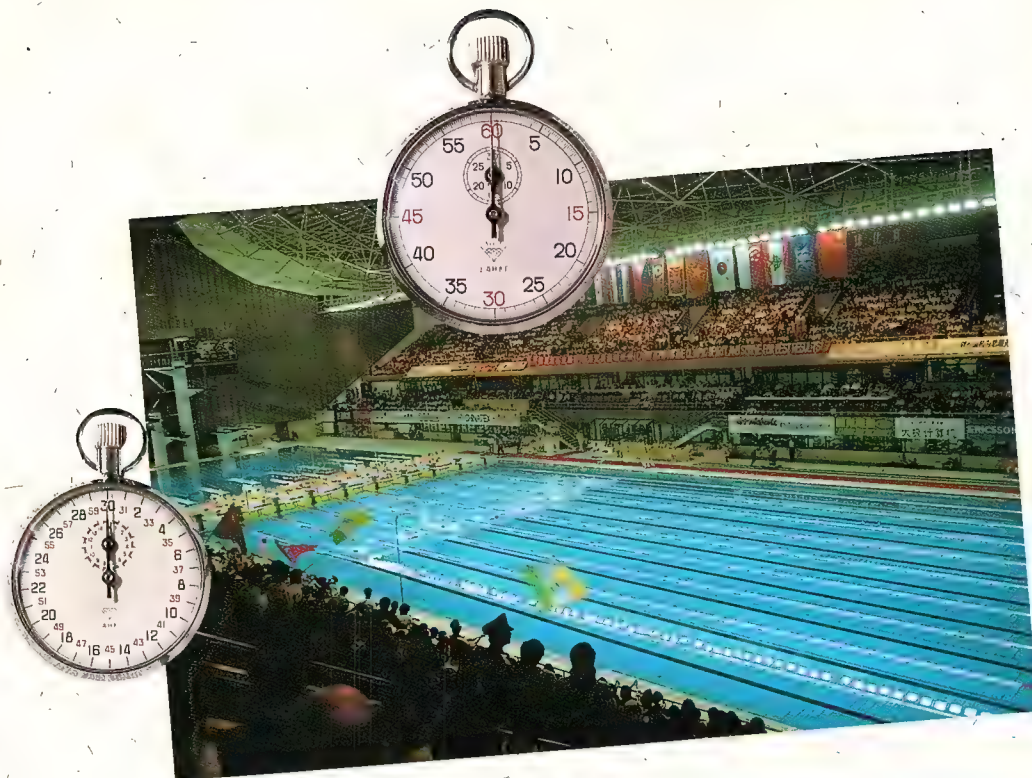
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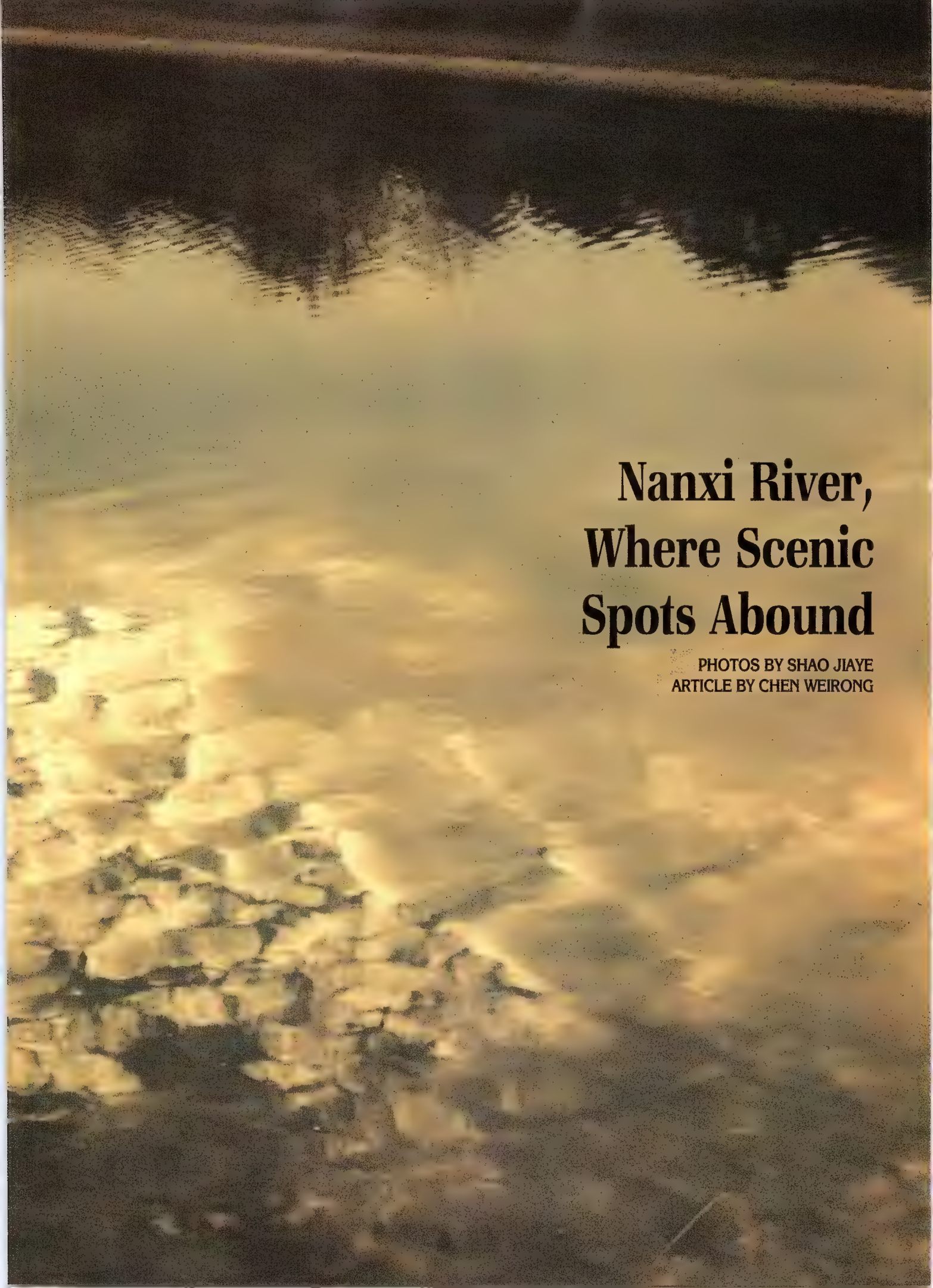


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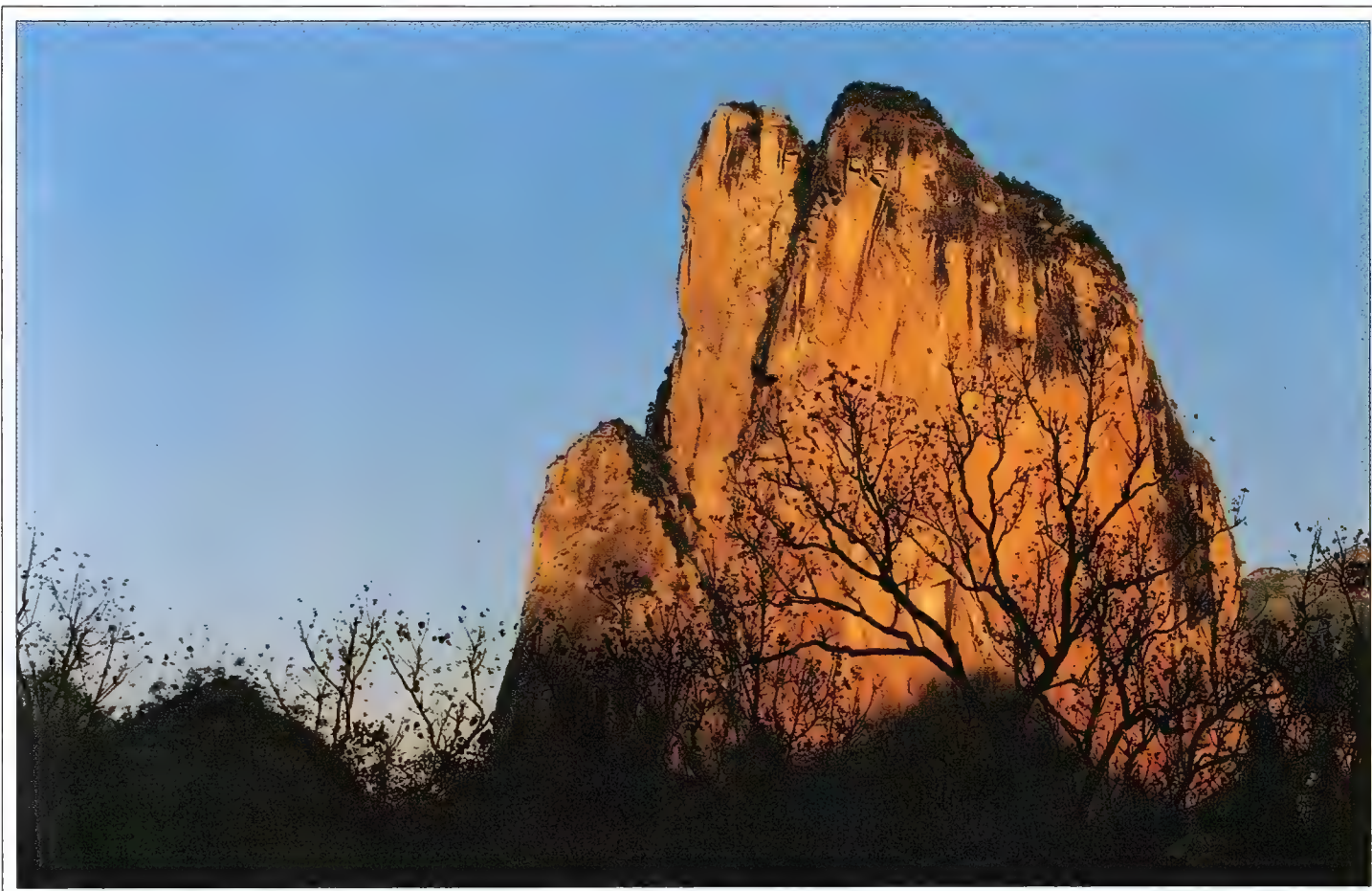
It is a pleasure to have a ride on a bamboo raft on the Nanxi River, enjoying the green forests on the banks as well as the reflection of clouds on water.



A scenic view of the Nanxi River. The foreground is dominated by a rocky, light-colored shoreline with some sparse vegetation. The river flows from the middle ground towards the background, reflecting the sky. The background is a dense, dark forest covering a hillside. The overall lighting is soft, suggesting a calm, possibly early morning or late afternoon setting.

Nanxi River, Where Scenic Spots Abound

PHOTOS BY SHAO JIAYE
ARTICLE BY CHEN WEIRONG



The towering Stone Mast Hill looks like a mast sail by the river. The top of the hill is a veritable monkeys' paradise.



A picturesque scene set in Pengxi Village. Green hills, limpid water, simple and ancient farm houses with smoke spiraling from kitchen chimneys form a harmonious picture with touches from a traditional mountain and water painting.

In late autumn last year, we embarked on a ferry at Anlanting wharf in Wenzhou City in southeastern Zhejiang Province. A ten-minute-ride took us to Yongjia County on the northern bank of the Oujiang River. There we boarded a coach heading north towards the Nanxi River.

The main tributary of the Oujiang River, the Nanxi River, has thirty-six bends and seventy-two shoals. The total length of the tourist route on the banks of the 145-kilometre-long river is 130 kilometres. Along the river are densely dotted over 800 scenic spots.

Jade Green Limpid River Water

Once we saw in the distance the Luofu Twin Pagodas on top of Tortoise Hill and Snake Hill, we knew we were approaching the entrance to the Nanxi River. The coach ran north along the limpid river. The colour of the water alternated from sapphire to jasper and jade in the depths to silver in the shallows.

One hour later, we arrived at Yutianling in Shatou Town in Yongjia County, where the Taipingyan Scenic Area is located. The place is surrounded by steep cliffs and by the stream stand green pine trees and reeds with white catkins. The water perfectly reflects some peculiar bamboo, wild orchids and maple woods by the stream.

Stone Mast Hill Scenic Area

According to our itinerary, we should have gone to visit the northernmost Stone Mast Hill Scenic Area and then return to Taipingyan. But we could not help lingering on in Taipingyan because we were enchanted by its beautiful scenery. So it was nearly evening when our coach finally arrived at the Shiweiyan (Stone Mast Hill) some forty kilometres from Taipingyan and north of Xia'ao Village of Hesheng Township.

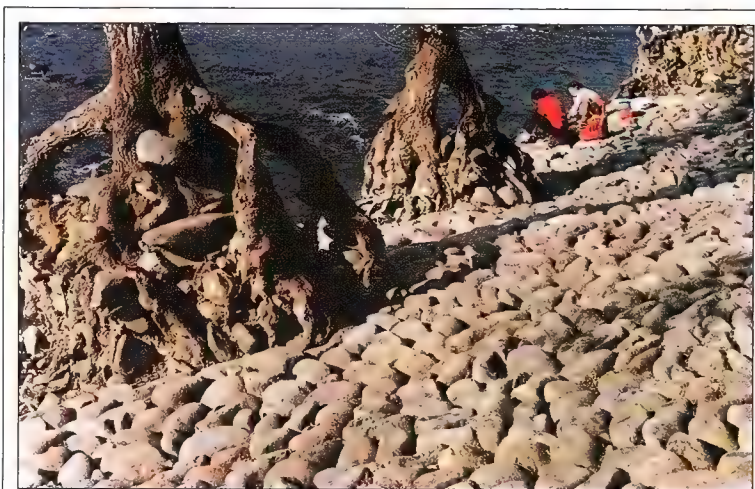
We put up for the night at the village. The 306-metre-high Stone Mast Hill is a huge rocky islet rising from the middle of the river. In the moonlight, the towering hill looked like a boat making sail in the dark.

According to legend, the Stone Mast Hill and the Old Man Hill once were of the same height. Each day the Stone Mast Hill grew about thirty centimetres, while at night the Old Man Hill would grow the same amount. Later, when the famous general Yang Wenguang of the Northern Song Dynasty (960-1127) passed by and realized this, fearing that the two hills would eventually poke holes in the sky, he allegedly shot an arrow at the Stone Mast Hill. As a result, half of the Stone Mast Hill was hewn away. Seeing this, the Old Man Hill could not help laughing. He laughed so much that he became bent. Since then the hill has been standing in that posture and has stopped growing.

Early next morning, we walked south from the village and headed towards a hill opposite the Stone Mast Hill to have a better look at it. We found that the Stone Mast Hill had a cave forming a natural tunnel allowing boats to go through. The top of the hill was covered with luxuriant woods and was a veritable monkeys' paradise.

One of us suggested going into the cave and we all agreed. So we set out for the southern foot of the Stone Mast Hill, where we boarded a small boat to the cave. Only three minutes after departing, the boat sailed into a one-metre-wide crevice and came to a stop. Raising our heads, we saw some very steep steps. One behind the other, we climbed these nearly vertical steps.

The steps led to the Water Fairy Maiden Cave, which was not large and could hold only twenty people or so. The cave tapered at



An ancient wharf is paved with cobbles in Pengxi Village by the Greater Nanxi River. These ancient trees seem to have shared the ups and downs of the river.

the end where there was a slanting iron candlestick indicating the place to worship the Water Fairy Maiden.

According to legend, the Water Fairy Maiden was originally a mortal girl, who cured the illnesses of her fellow villagers. After her death, her fellow villagers named the cave Water Fairy Maiden Cave to commemorate her.

Lesser Three Gorges

Down from the cave, we boarded the boat again and sailed towards the Lesser Three Gorges. In China there are quite a few places thus dubbed. I was wondering whether this place actually bore any resemblance to the Three Gorges of the Yangtse River to justify the name.

When we got there, I found that on both sides were upright peaks, and one could only see a winding band of the blue sky wedged between the peaks. Our small boat sailed on through the narrow waterway. In the narrowest section, the shipboards were only one metre from the cliffs. The oars were of no use and the boatman used a long pole to push against the cliffs on either side alternately, propelling the boat forward.

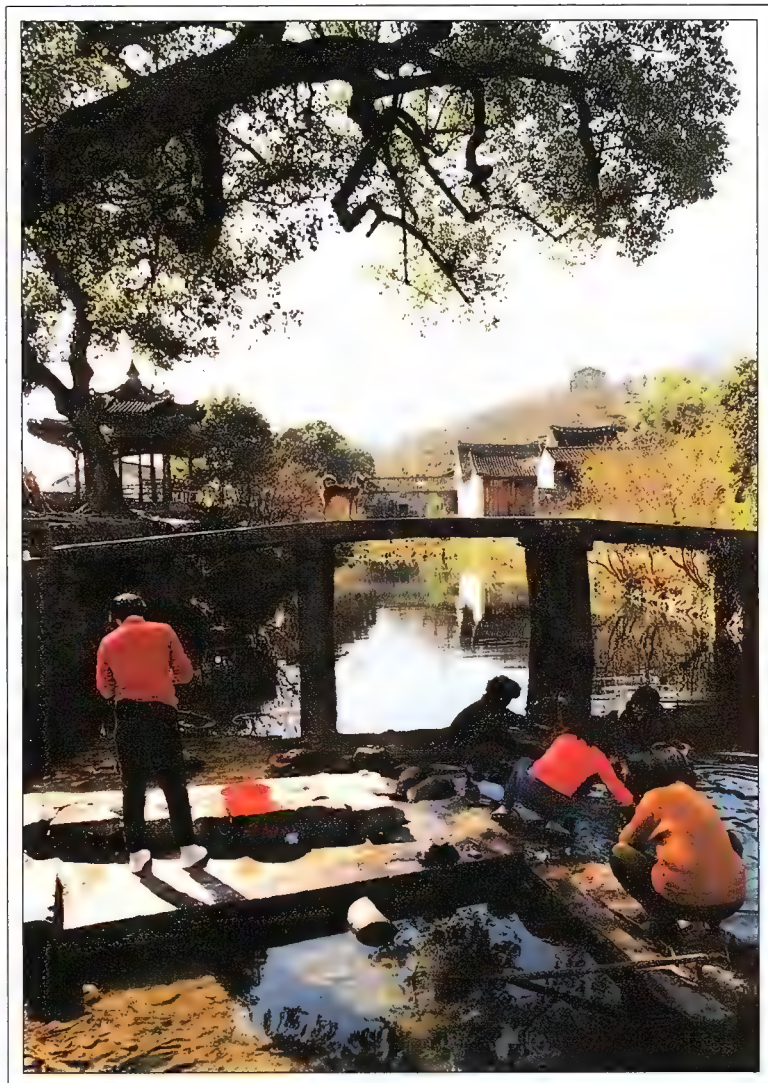
What a tranquil place! The only sounds we could hear were those produced by the punt-pole touching the cliffs, and the birdsongs from the banks. Suddenly, the sun cast its light through a narrow opening above our heads, and the river became full of colour.

The Nanxi River is in fact composed of the Greater Nanxi River and the Lesser Nanxi River. The Greater Nanxi River flows from north to south. Along the river are the following scenic spots: the Lion Hill, the Stone Mast Hill, the Taiping Hill, Cangpo Village, Furong Village and more. A trip along the Nanxi River was not complete without visiting those ancient villages.

A fortified mountain village appeared in front of us. It was Cangpo Village established in 1178 during the Song Dynasty. As soon as we entered the gate of the village, we saw a large slabstone with a relief of a black gauze cap. An old woman who basked herself in the sun by the gate proceeded to tell us about the village's past. In the long history of the village there had been quite a few high ranking officials native to this village. In the Southern Song Dynasty (1127-1279) alone, eighteen villagers held imperial court office. People believed the village's good luck in imperial examinations was attributed to the Black Gauze Cap Hill southwest of the village, so at the gate they carved the relief of a black gauze cap — a cap worn by government officials in feudal societies.

A Village Resembles the Four Treasures

The layout of the village is, if one uses the imagination, like the four treasures of the study — the writing brush, ink stick, ink slab and paper. The writing brush would be the long street paved with bricks and stones,



A group of village women washing clothes on the bank of the Nanxi River

Following Page: The light boat which is pointed at both ends is called a "grasshopper boat". It is the means of carrying both cargo and passengers on the Nanxi River. It is said that if it sails with the wind and downstream, it may speed along covering 500 kilometres in a day.



A mountain and the forest on the west bank of the Greater Nanxi River is shrouded in the morning mist. It looks mysterious and a bit chilly as well.



After autumn harvest, villagers living along the Nanxi River go up the mountains to collect firewood. Now the villagers residing in Fenglin Township by the Greater Nanxi River are crossing the river for home with their firewood.







A scene at autumn harvest in Yutianling of Shatou Town by the Greater Nanxi River. It is a common practice for people to tie straw to trees to dry and prevent mildew.



Ascending a height near Yutianling to enjoy a distant view of the Nanxi River brings before one's eyes a graceful pattern of a golden sandbeach alongside deep-green water.

pointing to the Bijia (Penholder) Hill to the right of the village. The ink stick could be a five-metre-long piece of stone in the village. The two ponds — one in the east and the other in the west — could serve as the ink slab. The whole village surrounded by walls built of cobblestones resembles a large piece of paper.

Why should such a particular layout exist in a mountain village? During the Southern Song Dynasty, the Yongjia area was prosperous and culturally flourishing. The emperors valued men of letters, which spurred the local people (including those in Cangpo Village) to study. So the older generation hoped the younger generation would start official careers by means of excellent performances in the civil service examination and would bring honour to their ancestors. The layout of the village is an indication of the ideals of the local people.

We then walked to the Renji Temple by the east pond. As far as the temple itself was concerned, it was nothing special. Yet the three 800-year-old towering cypresses were worth seeing. According to historical records, these cypresses were planted by Li Xizhai, an ancestor of the villagers. He planted four cypresses but one died because some villagers too often tied cows to them.

To protect the trees from being harmed again, Li Xizhai announced a rule that any cow tied to the cypresses would be killed. Later, when he found that one of his long-term hired hands dared to violate the ban and tie his cow to the tree, without a moment's hesitation, Li ordered the man to kill his own cow. From then on no one dared to do so again. Thus the other cypresses survived.

Another moving story involved the Wangxiong (Watching Elder Brother) Pavilion at the entrance of Cangpo Village and the Songdi (Seeing Younger Brother Off) Pavilion at the entrance of neighbouring Fangxiang Village.

Legend has it that in 1128, two brothers of the Li family, the younger one living in the village and the elder one in neighbouring Fangxiang Village, had great affection for each other. They often went to visit each other and have a heart-to-heart talk till late at night. When one of the brothers left for home, the other would carry a lantern to see him off to make sure that he arrived home safely. But as soon as one, say, the elder brother, arrived home, he would in turn accompany his younger brother home to ensure his safety. They would do so over and over again till daybreak. Later the two brothers decided to build a pavilion at the entrance of Cangpo Village and another at Fangxiang Village. Ever since, whenever one saw his brother off, he would stop at the pavilion and

when he saw the lantern hung in the other pavilion by his brother, he knew that his brother had safely arrived.

Furong Village Resembling a Ruyi

Down the river, we got to Furong (Hibiscus) Village. The village is named after the three cliffs southwest of the village because these cliffs are reddish-white in colour and in the shape of hibiscus in bud.

The west cliff looks like a black gauze cap worn by scholar-officials and is called so by the local people. It is said that when the progenitor of the village first arrived here from Fujian Province, he saw the cliff and thought that if he settled down in this place, his descendants would be favourably disposed to enter officialdom because this place as he put it "confronts a river like a waistband worn by officials and has at its back a cliff like a black gauze cap". His prediction was borne out by

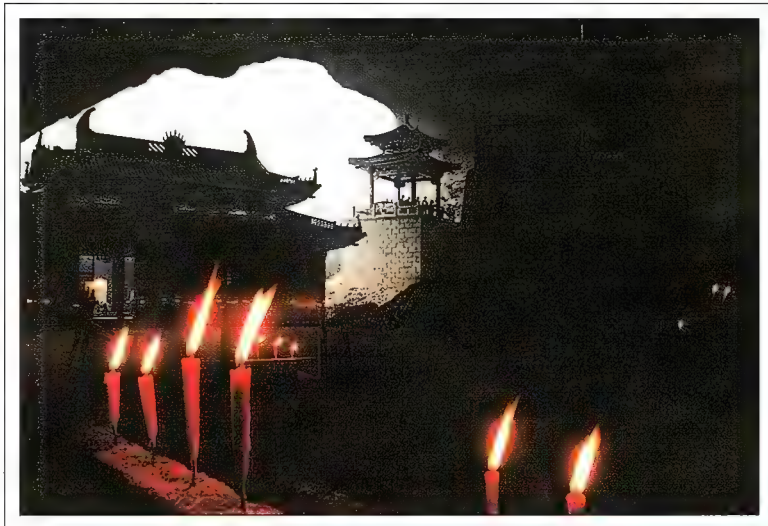


On the river bank paved with pebbles, villagers are busy drying red cloth, which is a specialty woven and dyed by villagers living along the Nanxi River, and which is an auspicious necessity in birthday and wedding ceremonies.

the fact that there were a lot of government officials who were native to the village.

When we entered the village, we found the village was of a squarish layout. In front of us was a main street paved with cobblestones. This street was called Ruyi Street. South of the middle section of the main street was a small lake with pavilions. The other streets were arranged in the shape of Seven Stars and Eight Dippers which made up the design of a *ruyi* (a S-shaped ornamental object usually made of jade, formerly a symbol of good luck). The stars are the square terraces at the crossroads and the dippers are the ponds at the confluences of the ditches in the village. I stood at Ruyi Street and was impressed by the clear and beautiful reflection of the Hibiscus Cliffs on the lake.

The large and deep Taogong Cave is the largest cave in the Daruoyan Scenic Area. Warm in winter and cool in summer, it is a good place to get away from the heat in summer.



Walking along the streets I found a stream flowing in ditches alongside the village's enclosing walls, streets and houses. The trickling water is convenient for washing and drainage as well as for use in case of fire.

Later I found out that the original village was destroyed in the 13th century by the Yuan troops. The present village was rebuilt in the early Qing Dynasty (1644-1911).

After visiting Furong Village, we went on with our trip. In the middle of the Nanxi River, we saw a solitary islet called Lion Crag because it looked like a lion.

Taogong Cave in the Daruoyan Scenic Area

Then we went on down the Nanxi River and got to Tanxia Village, where the river is joined by the Lesser Nanxi River running from east to west. By the Lesser Nanxi River there is a scenic spot — Daruoyan Scenic Area. A fourteen-kilometre bus ride took us from Tanxia Village to here. The essence of Daruoyan Scenic Area is the Taogong (Lord Tao) Cave, which is a spiral-shell-shaped ancient cave and can hold a gathering of thousands of people.

When we entered the cave, we found it was bright enough to read a novel in small characters. Outside the cave, tiny drops of water fill the air all the year round and when the sun rises, a rainbow appears in front of the cave.

The cave was the place where Tao Hongjing (456-536), a hermit and a great scholarly compiler of Taoist texts in the Southern Dynasties (420-589), once lived. He was also a general of the Liang Dynasty (502-557), but resigned his office at the age of 36 and lived in seclusion in this cave. Emperor Wudi of the Liang Dynasty often continued to discuss with him matters concerning state affairs, which earned him the sobriquet of "prime minister in the mountains".

Riding on a bamboo raft along the Nanxi River is a "must". Bamboo rafts are the oldest means of water transport in areas south of the Yangtse River. The bamboo raft in the Nanxi River is built with several lengths of bamboo tied together with the head of the raft bending upwards.

Sitting on the bamboo raft, I found water kept swelling up between the bamboo and soon my shoes were wet. Looking to both sides, I saw mountain ranges majestically rising up, and looking down I saw the reflection of red maple, green willows, white reed catkins and the blue sky, now broken by the ripples caused by the raft, now joined together.

Translated by Chen Jiaji



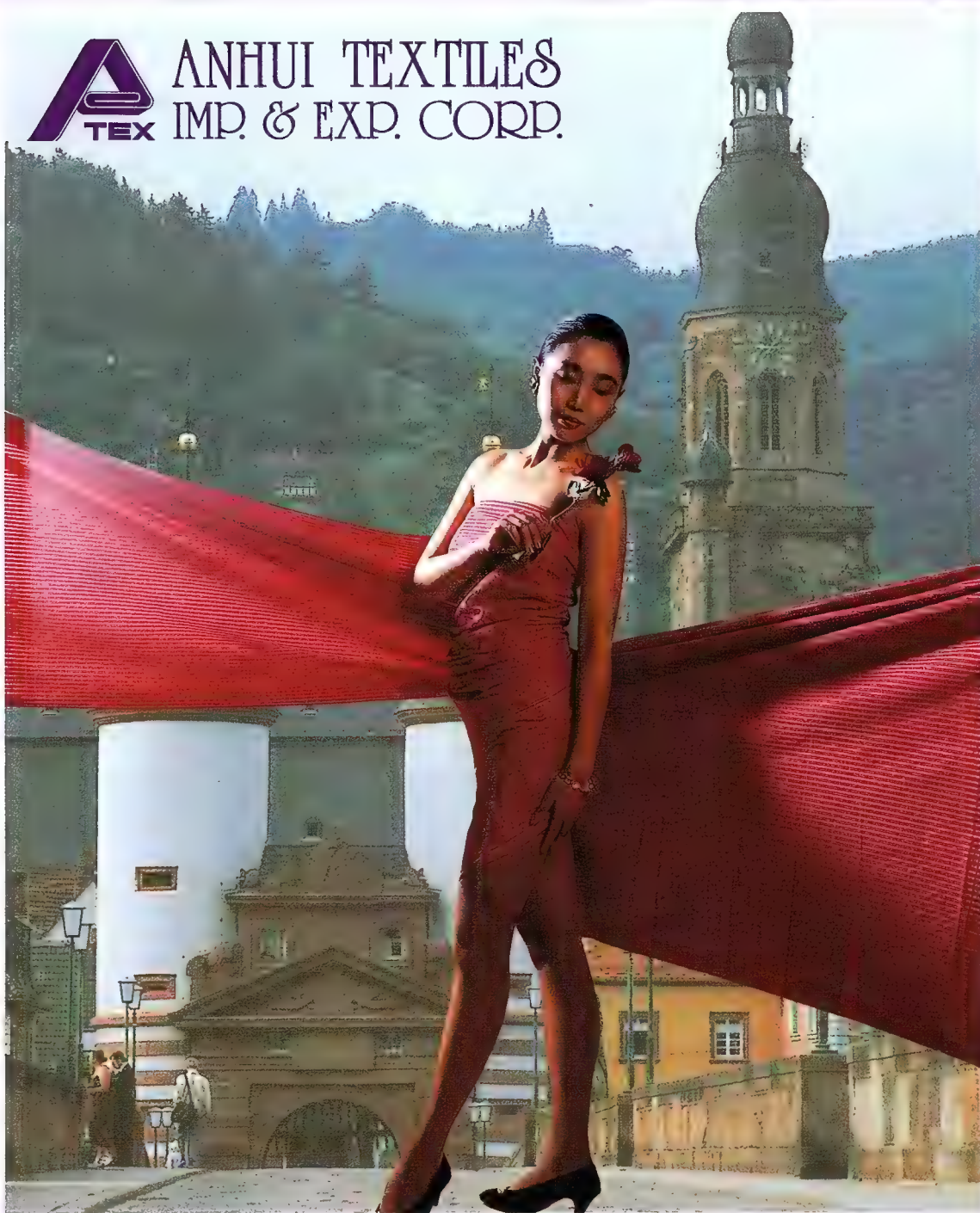
In autumn, the fields surrounding Fenghuang Village by the Lesser Nanxi River are covered with green crops alternating with yellow crops. From a distance, the fields look like a huge carpet.



A bamboo raft is a means of water transport in the Nanxi River used since ancient times.



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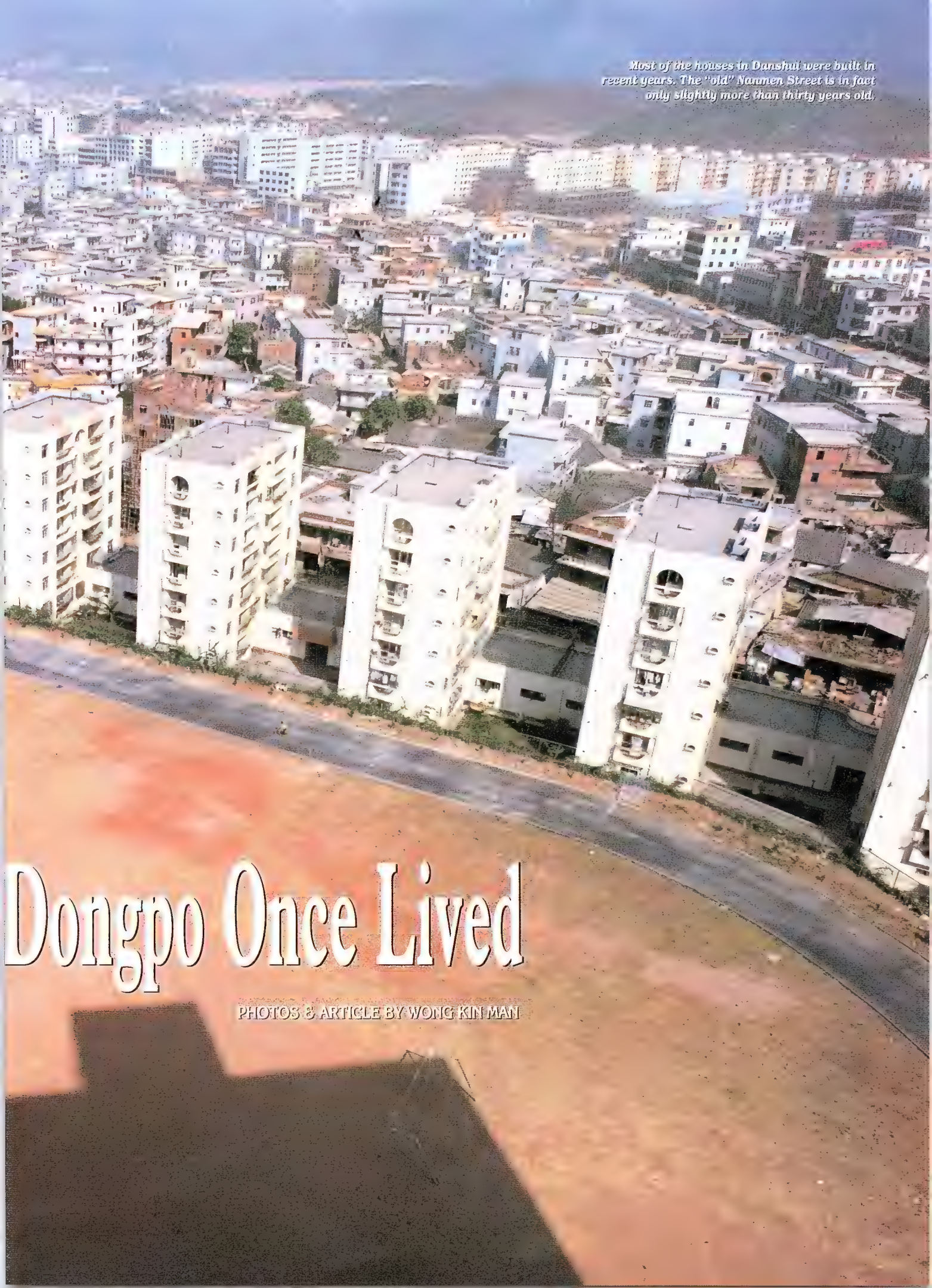
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The new houses in a farming village in Aotou. The villagers have retained some aspects of their traditional life style. Such an example can be seen in the tall lanterns hanging above the lifts of all the modern houses.



Huizhou – Where Su



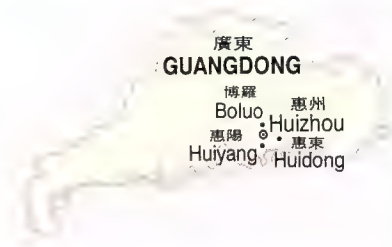
Most of the houses in Danshui were built in recent years. The "old" Naamen Street is in fact only slightly more than thirty years old.

Dongpo Once Lived

PHOTOS & ARTICLE BY WONG KIN MAN



A bird's-eye view of the Huizhou Bridge. The Dongjiang River under the bridge is a major source of drinking water for Hong Kong's people. Not far away is the West Lake.



In recent years, Huizhou in Guangdong Province, a city bordering on Shenzhen, near Hong Kong and not far away from Guangzhou, and endowed with good harbours, has become an attractive area for both Chinese and foreign investment. Besides the above-mentioned favourable location, it also boasts some relics related to the Song Dynasty poet Su Dongpo, the beautiful West Lake, the Tangquan Hot Spring and the Luofu Mountain. Not surprisingly, Huizhou has also become a popular spot for tourists from Hong Kong, Macau and overseas.

At present, Huizhou City has jurisdiction over its city centre (Huicheng District), Longmen County, Boluo County, Huiyang County (Danshui), Huidong County and the Dayawan Economic and Technical Development Zone.

In 1094, the great poet and writer Su Dongpo (1037-1101) was relegated to Huizhou, where he lived for three years and wrote more than 200 poems, which had a great influence upon the development of Huizhou's politics, economy and culture.

Modernization Mingling with Tradition

A 90-minute journey by the hydrofoil *Aotou No.1* took passengers from Hong Kong to the Aotou Harbour in Danshui county seat.

Beyond the harbour lies a stretch of fields and not far away from the sea behind some small hills, construction sites dominate. This area marks the Dayawan Economic and Technical Development Zone, where the Panda Automobiles Corporation and the petrochemical plant, and other investments worth one thousand million American dollars are situated. Though most of the projects were only in the starting stage, I saw other evidence of investment along the highway. It is obvious that the area outpaces locations nearby in terms of attracting investment.

I first visited Chawangshan, one of the several fishing villages on the harbour. The villagers living in compact communities are descendants of the Li, Luo and Huang families originally from Chaozhou in eastern Guangdong. There I saw every family had a new modern house. Strangely enough, above all the lintels hung such amulets as the Eight



A truly wonderful scene is created by the setting sun over the West Lake.

Trigrams, scissors, tangerines, mirrors and charm streamers. But I felt nothing surprising after I learned the following story. The inhabitants there were from families that had been fishermen for generations. Taking advantage of the large scale industrial development of the surrounding areas, they suddenly became rich by selling their privately owned land, which had increased in value as much as 100 times. They built new houses but retained their long-standing tradition of reverence for the sea from which they and their forebears had earned a living.

In Pursuit of Fashion

During the daytime, the deafening popping of firecrackers heralding the opening of various companies could intermittently be heard which called to mind Spring Festival, and deprived people of peace and quiet. Luckily, I stayed in the Zhonghui Hotel, the best one in Danshui Town, which saved me from being disturbed.

At about seven o'clock in the evening, I went to a privately owned ballroom just recently opened. Fashionably dressed couples were dancing enjoyably. With more than 200 seats, this ballroom was among the largest in the town. Though it had been opened for business for only a couple of days, it was already drawing quite a few dancing aficionados.

Since becoming well-off, people in the town are in pursuit of leisure enjoyment by learning to sing and dance. No wonder the twenty-odd karaokes and ballrooms attracted many patrons.

Places Connected with Su Dongpo

A one-hour coach ride took me from Danshui to the urban district of Huizhou. I put up for the night at the West Lake Hotel. My room overlooked the shimmering West Lake. In the moonlight, I saw in the distance the Sizhou Tower standing on an islet. Suddenly I remembered

Huizhou's West Lake in Guangdong, Hangzhou's West Lake in Zhejiang and the West Lake in Yingshang County in Anhui are in places where Su Dongpo had once been relegated. They are collectively known as the Three West Lakes in China (by Zhao Jianbin).



the scene described in one of Su Dongpo's poem: "In the first watch, the moon emerges from behind the hill, whilst the jade tower rests on gentle waves."

In China, there are as many as 36 lakes with the name of West Lake, among which the most famous are Hangzhou's West Lake in Zhejiang, Yingzhou's (now Yingshang County) West Lake in Anhui, and Huizhou's West Lake. Since these three West Lakes are in places where Su Dongpo was once stationed it has been said that wherever Su Dongpo went, there was a West Lake.

Like Hangzhou's more famous counterpart, Huizhou's West Lake has a Su Causeway which lies quite near the entrance of the Park. When I walked along this causeway, stretching some two to three hundred metres in length, I found that the Xixin Bridge in the middle section of the causeway had been rebuilt. It is said that before Su Dongpo came to Huizhou, there was neither a causeway nor a bridge in the lake. When Su saw that the villagers in the Xicun Village (the site of today's Huizhou Hotel) had to wade or go by boat across the lake to gather firewood or to farm, he proposed and contributed to the building of a causeway and a bridge for the convenience of the local people.

Near the Sizhou Tower is the Su Dongpo Museum. On entering the hall I came face to face with his statue. On display in the museum were paintings, articles, photos and objects related to the life of Su Dongpo. Though the books containing Su's poems and prose were not the original copies, they nonetheless had a long history behind them.

After stopping at the museum, I went to the neighbouring Tomb of Wang Zhaoyun, which was surrounded by pine trees. The couplets hung on the Liuru Pavilion in front of the tomb related a moving love story. Wang Zhaoyun had been a beautiful songstress in Zhejiang Province. She offered to be Su Dongpo's maidservant and later became Su's con-

The West Lake Hotel and the Huizhou Hotel are situated by the West Lake. These garden hotels enhance the beauty of the West Lake and allow visitors to appreciate the lake.



The county town of Huidong seems to be lacking in modern buildings but the prices of beauty shops and karaokes are certainly above standard.



After becoming well-off, people in Danshui are pursuing fashions and fads in their leisure time. At present the popular fashions are singing and dancing.



The ancient Chongxu Temple is considered the seventh Taoist Cave in China. The carvings in the temple are exquisitely rendered.

cubine. When Su Dongpo was relegated to Huizhou, his other concubines left him one on the heels of another. But Wang remained loyal to Su. Unfortunately she died young, which plunged Su Dongpo into deep sorrow. He gave her an elaborate funeral and had her buried in an excellent setting.

Ancient Walled City and Charming Beach

After a two-hour coach trip from Huizhou, I arrived at the ancient walled city of Pinghai in Huidong County. The old city walls were gone and only the north, south, east and west city gates remained.

This walled city was built in 1385 during the Ming Dynasty. At that time, people in the coastal areas were plagued by piracy. Zhu Yuanzhang, the first emperor of the Ming Dynasty, with the reign title of Hong Wu, ordered the construction of Pinghai (Calm Sea) Walled City to repel the pirates.

The length of the original six-metre-high city walls added up to 1,700 metres. The walls were built of bricks and had 720 embrasures. Over the city walls there used to be towers and temples, but now most of them have disappeared.

People living in the city speak a language passed down by their forefathers. The language is a mixture of a dialect spoken in northern China, the Chaozhou dialect and the Cantonese dialect. On the third day of the third lunar month, the annual Dragon Festival is celebrated here. On that day people living in this city and in the harbour would perform the Dragon Dance and the Hobbyhorse Dance. Unfortunately, my stay there did not coincide with this occasion. But in consolation I had the opportunity to taste such delicious seafood as abalone, prawns and stewed conch with American ginseng.

Then I went by coach to Xunliao Bay, where I saw some strange looking rocks towering above the shore, which made me think of tales about sea gods and sea monsters. The long beach along the bay created a beautiful scene. The water here was clear and shallow.



The Luofu Mountain has been a famous sacred place of Taoism in China for over 1,600 years since Ge Hong set up a temple, gathered herbs and practised alchemy here.

measuring less than 1.5 metres in depth even 100 metres offshore. Treading on the fine white sand was a comfortable sensation.

Scenic Luofu Mountain

After an hour's ride, I arrived at the Chongxu Taoist Temple on the Luofu Mountain. The temple is about 67 kilometres north of Huizhou. The Luofu Mountain is one of the four famous mountains in Guangdong Province. The 250-kilometre-long mountain stretches over Boluo, Longmen and Zengcheng Counties. There are eighteen wonderful scenes in the mountain, among which the most famous is the Chongxu Taoist Temple complex which is regarded as the seventh Taoist Cave in China.

I discovered that the two towering ancient trees in front of the temple had died, and the carvings above the roofs and on the eaves looked quite new. Apparently they had just undergone repairs. The antique horizontal board hanging on the Sanqing Hall is inscribed with the following characters written by Emperor Jiaqing (reign dates 1796-1820) of the Qing Dynasty: "Benefiting the people and praying for success."

In the Memorial Temple to Ge Hong, I looked with reverence at the statues of Ge Hong (284-364) and his wife Bao Gu, which I had long yearned to see. Ge Hong's statue portrayed him sitting cross-legged and wearing a golden Taoist robe.

Ge Hong, in addition to being a famous Taoist theorist, was also a pharmacologist and lived during the Eastern Jin Dynasty (317-420). He came to the Luofu Mountain to practise alchemy and built four temples namely Pidu, Guqing, Baihe and Sulao, thus establishing Taoist sacred places in Guangdong and Guangxi. The Pidu Temple had undergone

The inhabitants of the 600-year-old Pinghai Walled City speak a language passed down by their forefathers. The language is a mixture of a dialect spoken in northern China, the Chaozhou dialect and the Cantonese dialect. On the third day of the third lunar month, the annual local Dragon Festival is held. People perform the Dragon Dance and the Hobbyhorse Dance on that day (by Zhao Jianbin).



repairs during successive dynasties, and in 1087 was bestowed the name Chongxu by Emperor Zhezong (reign dates 1086-1100) of the Northern Song Dynasty. Since then the name has been retained.

There is a well called Longevity Well in the dining hall of the temple. I drank some well water and some tea brewed in the well water, and found that both the water and tea were extremely clear and refreshing. It is said that over 1,600 years ago, Ge Hong fetched water from this well to refine concoctions in his alchemical practice.

Some noteworthy features around the temple are Ge Hong's Herb-washing Pond and the Zhichuan Refining Stove, while 100 metres to the left of the temple is the Zhuming Cave, which ranks first among the eighteen scenic spots in the Luofu Mountain.

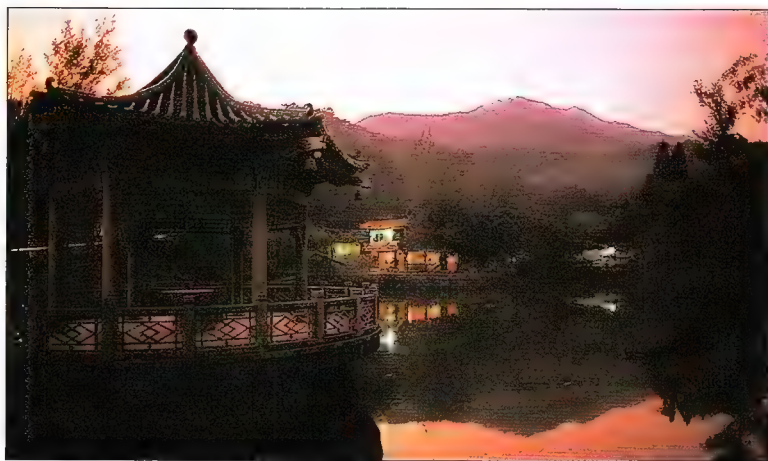
Bathing in the Dongpo Hot Spring

It was a pity that I was unable to visit the Nankun Mountain in Longmen County, which is said to be covered with lush green bamboo and is a scenic summer resort. But I was lucky to enjoy a hot spring bath at the Tangquan (Hot Spring) Hotel at the foot of Baishui Mountain on my way back to Huizhou.

The Tangquan Hot Spring is located by a tall kapok tree by Baihu Stream not far from the hotel. The spring water temperature is 70°C and gushes all the year round. The water contains many kinds of trace elements which are very good for health. Su Dongpo visited and bathed in the spring three times, after which the spring became even more renowned.

I did not have a chance to look at the actual hot spring because the spring water had been drawn into the Tangquan Hot Spring Hotel. As I lay immersed in the hot spring water in the hydraulic massaging bathtub, I felt stimulated and thoroughly refreshed. My sensations shed light on Su Dongpo's inspiration for writing the line, "All the cloudy moods have been washed away" after he took a bath in this hot spring. **G**

Translated by Chen Jiaji



The Zhuming Cave at dusk offers a harmonious atmosphere of a sacred Taoist site (by Nigel Hicks).



The four city gates still remain largely intact (by Sun Zening).

Vying for the Iron Ring

The Huapao Festival of the Dong People

PHOTOS & TEXT BY
WEI RONGGUANG



During the festival, the dances are accompanied by colourful dragons and lions. Dragon lanterns in Sanjiang are known not only for their bright hues and intricate craftsmanship but also because they are performed by women.



On the competition ground, a Dong young man wearing a silver teeth hat is giving a performance of "Romance of the Lovers" with a Dong girl.





Before the competition commences the cannon team would hold a special ritual featuring gun-firing.

The third month of the lunar calendar in spring sees both the traditional festival San Yue Jie, or the Third Month Street, of the Bai nationality in Dali, Yunnan Province and the Huapao (Fired Iron Ring) Festival on the third of the month of the Dong nationality in Sanjiang, Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region. As my vacation time was limited, I could attend only one of the two. It happens that the latter was in a nearer place, so I started my journey at Huaihua, Hunan Province for Sanjiang in the south by taking a train down the Zhijiang-Liuzhou Railway, to get a first-hand impression of the lively Dong festival.

I arrived long before the competition of fired iron rings had actually started. Wandering down the streets, I saw young Dong girls in colourful attire complete with silver necklets, earrings or bracelets glittering resplendently in the sun. Other Dong girls in traditional dress were making their rounds through lanes and streets holding dragon and lion lanterns, which attracted large crowds of onlookers.

Towards one o'clock in the afternoon, a dozen Dong people carrying five *huapao* boxes decorated

with coloured ribbons and tassels and five fat pigs butchered and coated with a layer of red and rice wine, circled round the streets in the town before they headed for the *huapao* festival grounds. In fact, the pigs and rice wine were the trophies for the winners of the competition.

A cannon shot on the ground launched the competition. With it a large iron ring was fired into the air. This is why it was referred to as *huapao*, or fired iron ring! Players on the *huapao* teams, who were strapping young men from nearby villages, bare to the waist, swarmed to where the iron ring had just landed to scramble for it. The competition however, has rules, so as to prevent the unnecessary misunderstandings caused by an eagerness to win. The players are banned from directly attacking others, but there is no set time limit. The winning team is that whose players secure the iron ring and hand it to the commanding rostrum.

Actually, strategy was essential to winning the game. Teams had carefully formulated their game plans long before, which explained the high degree of



The key player in the fired iron ring competition is hailed as a hero and thrown into the air by his fellow players.



These three big pigs are trophies for the winning team in each round of the competition.



Dong men don their most colourful attire to celebrate the annual festival.




**During the bird-fighting, spectators are required to stand outside the lime ring.
The ones sitting within the rings are judges.**



tacit coordination among their players. A player, on grabbing the iron ring, signaled to one of his teammates who then stormed through the encirclement with all his might. He was accosted by a crowd of players on the rival team, which resulted a heated entanglement not unlike a rugby scrum. This one, however, was merely a decoy. Seizing the moment, the unnoticed player with the ring suddenly dashed through the crowd like a rocket towards the commanding rostrum and handed his booty to the referee. The competition was won on a stratagem resembling a draw play in an American football game.

There were three rounds of the iron ring scrambling competition. After that, I moved with a stream of people to a small lawn not far from the *huapao* ground. Bird cages were seen everywhere hanging from tree branches, placed under the shade and on the lawn. A rough count showed there were 300 to 400 cages. It looked to be a bird market. This was where the bird fights took place. In the middle of the lawn there was a clay terrace about one metre square. Before the matches, the referee announced the rules of the game

and invited the bird owners to sign in. Then the birds — a breed of thrush — would be pitted against one another according to their serial numbers. Two cages were placed on the terrace facing each other. The windows in both cages were then opened. Both birds, staying within their own cages, would peck at each other. The action, however, was not so fierce as to culminate in the death of one party. If one of the two birds recoiled onto the perch in his cage or flinched from his opponent by staying at the bottom of the cage, he would be judged the loser. A bird owner told me that an unbeaten thrush would be awarded the title of "bird king" which commands high value. Once someone offered to exchange a bird king for a buffalo but was turned down by the bird owner.

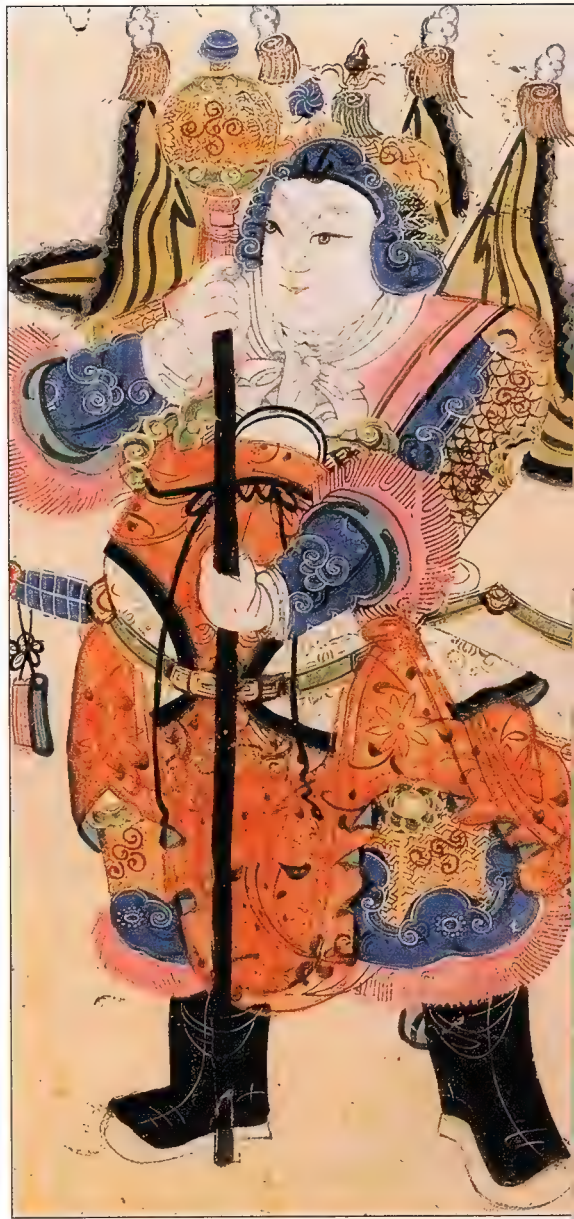
Though not unique to Sanjiang, the Fired Iron Ring Festival originated in this place. It was said that long ago the chief of a Dong village named Fulu in Sanjiang had a very beautiful daughter who attracted a great number of suitors. Wishing to select the bravest young man as his son-in-law, the village chief announced a fired iron ring competition on the third day of the third lunar month with the promise to give his daughter to the winner. As years went by, this fired iron ring competition became one of the traditional festivals of the Dong nationality. Each of the three rings vied for has a name with a symbolic meaning. The first was known as the "ring of victory", the second the "ring of solidarity" and the third the "ring of happiness". All the ring winners, however, looked very happy. 

Translated by Xia Ping

Sichuan's Mianzhu New Year Pictures

PHOTOS & TEXT
BY LIU GUANGFU
PAINTINGS BY
LIU ZHUMEI

Traditional pictures for doors with two generals each holding a hammer in his hands



Young girl in a dance



Zhong Kui, the Devil-eater (painting by Li Fangfu)



Qin Qiong, general of the Tang Dynasty (traditional Tianshuijiao picture)



In the Warm Sichuan Sunshine



Mianzhu New Year pictures are a special local art form produced in Mianzhu County in northern Sichuan. The paper used is made from bamboo which grows abundantly in the county. It is coated with a white slush and is generally known as Fenjian paper.

Mianzhu New Year pictures are divided into two types according to colour: red pictures and black pictures. The red pictures, or coloured pictures, include pictures for doors, square pictures and strip pictures; the black pictures, or wood-block prints in ink and cinnabar, are generally very large vertical scrolls which are hung in the main room of the house and other smaller vertical scrolls. Both of these types of pictures are produced using the following method: first, the artist makes an outline draft, then the engraver carves the draft onto a wood block and prints it in ink on the Fenjian paper, and finally the painter colours the print. Different painters can transform the same print into richly colourful pictures in different styles.

The most representative of Mianzhu New Year pictures are the Mingzhan pictures which are shaded in stages from deep colours to pastels and the Minggua pictures where the draft is outlined in white powder. The Tianshuijiao pictures, which originated in ancient times, also have their own distinctive features. When the painters had finished the task assigned to them by their employers, they would use the leftover pigment and scraps of paper and quickly produce these pictures in their spare time. As time was short and the supply of materials were limited, these pictures were usually dashed off in just a few strokes, but they still achieved a lively artistic impact of simplicity and also convey originality. Today, they are highly valued.

Mianzhu New Year pictures take their themes mainly from eminent figures in history, drama and folktales and include women, children, warriors and gods. Some depict animals and fruit as well as calligraphy and paintings by well-known personages, and show people's longing for a good harvest and flourishing domestic animals. In composition, the Mianzhu New Year pictures display symmetry in arrangement of images, integrity of lines and figures depicted as well as harmony in composition. There is a clear distinction between primary objects and secondary images and background. As far as pigmentation is concerned contrasting colours achieve a lively artistic result by using plain, bright pigments; and lines are executed with a combination of strength and grace, and are concise yet fluid, sparse for individual figures but complex in certain instances and reveal a lively rhythm. In addition, exaggeration, deformation, symbolism and allegory are applied in almost every picture. Some pictures, in order to achieve a jocular and lively aesthetic effect, completely break away from the Western conventions of perspective and proportion.

In the last forty years the Mianzhu New Year pictures have explored new ways of blending traditional methods with modern techniques. The pictures produced today are perfect integrations of the traditional with the modern, flavoured by Sichuan's unique folk customs to create a distinct style of their own. **G**

Translated by Xiong Zhenru

At the Dragon Boat Festival in the fifth lunar month



Setting Free Captive Living Things Festival





Carrying rice seedlings



A Scene from the Drama Hiding in the Chest



Bamboo Country

A Visit to Anji County in Zhejiang

PHOTOS BY WANG JINQIU TEXT BY WANG JUNGUO

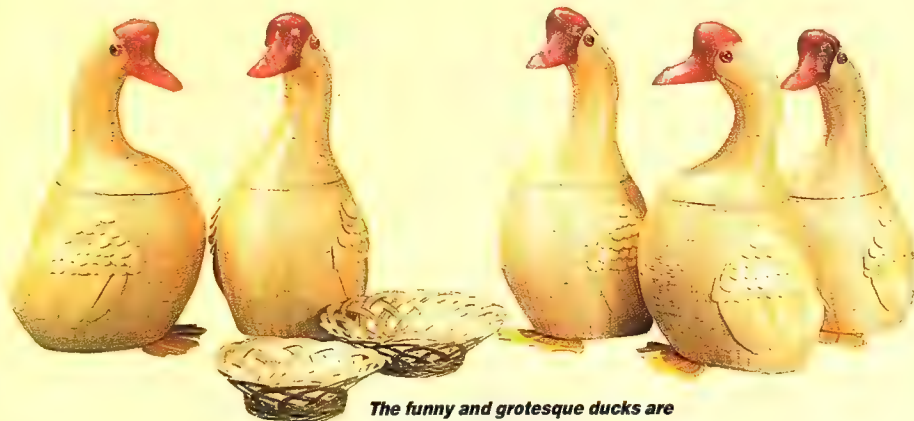




Left to Right:
The coloured mao bamboos have yellow and green stripes on the stem.
The Gold Needle bamboo shoots with fresh colours are edible.
The Buddha Belly bamboos have the joints as bulging resembling a Buddha's belly.

The ease of transportation by water constitutes one of the favourable conditions for the bamboo raising in Anji.





The funny and grotesque ducks are bamboo-woven handicrafts.



The thatched hut in the depth of the bamboo grove is cool in summer and warm in winter.

Located in northern Zhejiang, the terrain of Anji County embraces numerous mountains and hills covered with bamboo groves, with the West Tiaoxi River, one of the eight major rivers in the province, meandering through its territory. The county has 54,000 hectares of bamboo groves, of which 43,000 hectares are dedicated to the cultivation of *mao* or *nan* bamboo (*Phyllostachys pubescens*), producing 14 million bamboo trees each year and hence the name of "Bamboo Country".

One of the major bamboo producing countries in the world, China has a millennia-long experience in using bamboo. As early as the Warring States period (475-221 B.C.), people carved words on the bamboo strips and strung them into a volume, the predecessor of modern books.

During the Qin Dynasty (221-207 B.C.), the writing brush was invented, making use of the bamboo stem as the brush stalk, which remains in use up to now. Utilizing bamboo as construction material for making beams, columns, rafters and walls in China has a history reaching back several thousand years.

Anji is fifty kilometres away from Hangzhou. Bamboo groves can be seen around the farmers' houses where the chairs, stools, sleeping sheets, baskets, ladles and chopsticks, water pipes and rafters are all made of bamboo.

Anji is located in a subtropical zone with distinct seasons, abundant rain and a long frost-free period of 226 days, having an average annual temperature of 15.5°C and an annual precipitation of 1352.6 mm. This kind of climate is favourable to growing bamboo which needs a warm and humid climate. As far as topography is concerned, Anji County is composed of various terrain, most of which is covered with a thick layer of fertile acidic soil with a high organic content, which is ideal for bamboo.

Apart from the objective conditions for the growth of bamboo, there is also a need for the transportation of bamboo to market. Adjacent to the Hangjiahu Plain and close to the economically developed areas of



With simple tools and dedication, the farmers in this workshop are making bamboo handicrafts.



The densely planted bamboo groves have earned Anji the title of "Bamboo Country".



The farmer in Anji rich in bamboo is making a bundle of bamboos ready for the market.

Shanghai and southern Jiangsu, bamboo enjoys a large consumer market. Besides, the West Tiaoxi River passing through the county is navigable for the bamboo rafts to flow to other regions during the high tide. All these optimal conditions have given rise to the vast expanse of bamboo groves.

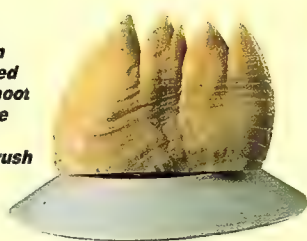
In the past Anji County sold bamboos only, but now the situation has changed. The local inhabitants are developing vertically integrated industries to leverage their advantage in this abundant resource. Everywhere in the county one can see workshops for bamboo articles and bamboo weaving handicrafts. There is also a factory producing bamboo shoot cans.

If one comes to Anji, it is a must that he visits the bamboo garden. Located by the West Tiaoxi River at the foot of the Lingfeng Mountain six kilometres away from the county town, and with an area of seventeen hectares, the bamboo garden, which was an uncultivated land ten years ago, sports 250 species of bamboo now.

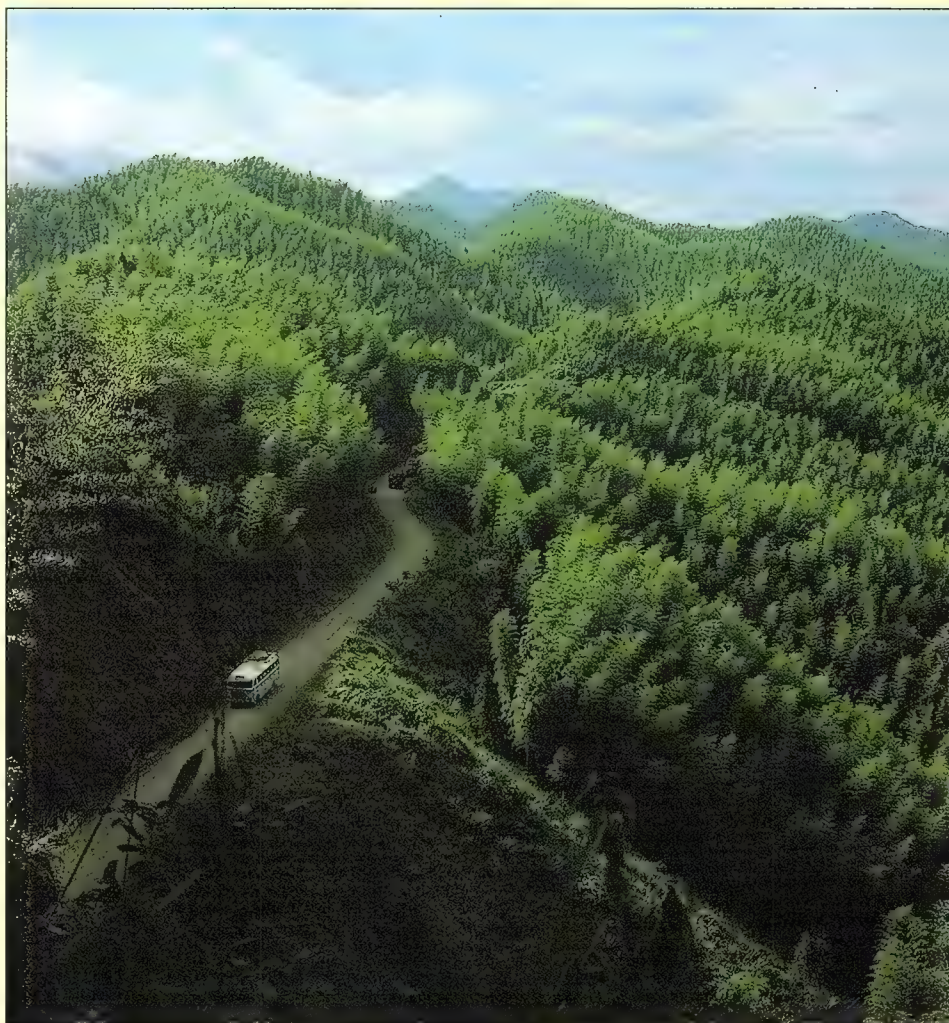
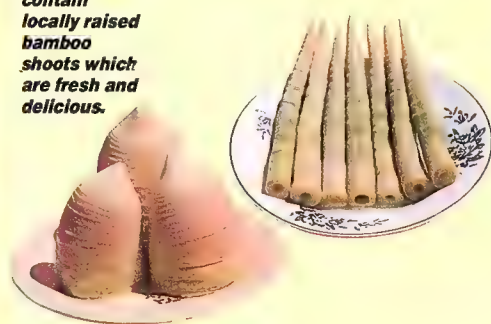
Walking in such a large garden, you are surrounded by bamboos: *nan* bamboos more than thirty metres high, strong and robust *fang* bamboos (*Chimonobambusa quadrangularis*), and mottled bamboos among others. What I liked best was the Tortoise Shell bamboos (var. *heterocycla*) with the joints in a shape resembling a tortoise shell. It is said that Tortoise Shell bamboos look like this only after they have undergone a natural transformation of shape. It is truly precious, for I found only five or six bamboos of this species during my inspection of the garden.

Translated by Gu Weizhou

► This is a rarely seen multiheaded bamboo shoot evoking the image of a Chinese brush stand.



▼ The dishes contain locally raised bamboo shoots which are fresh and delicious.



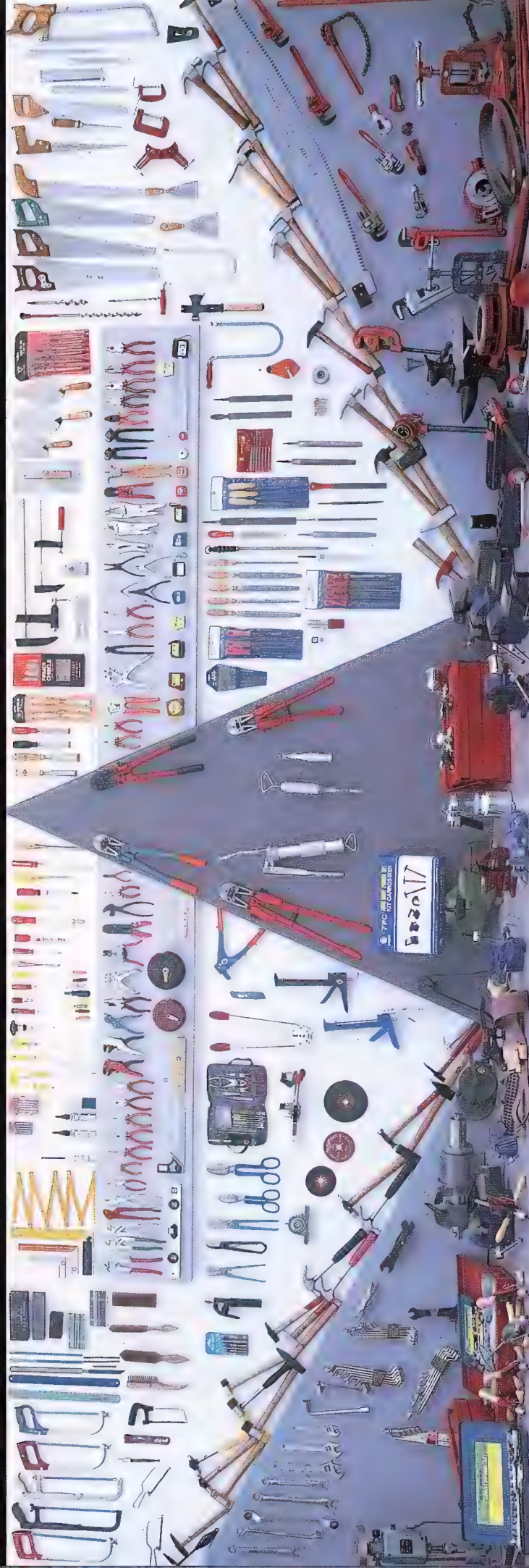
The hills in Anji are covered with bamboos.



Anji County produces fresh bamboo shoots all the year round. This is a view of a local bamboo shoot cans factory.

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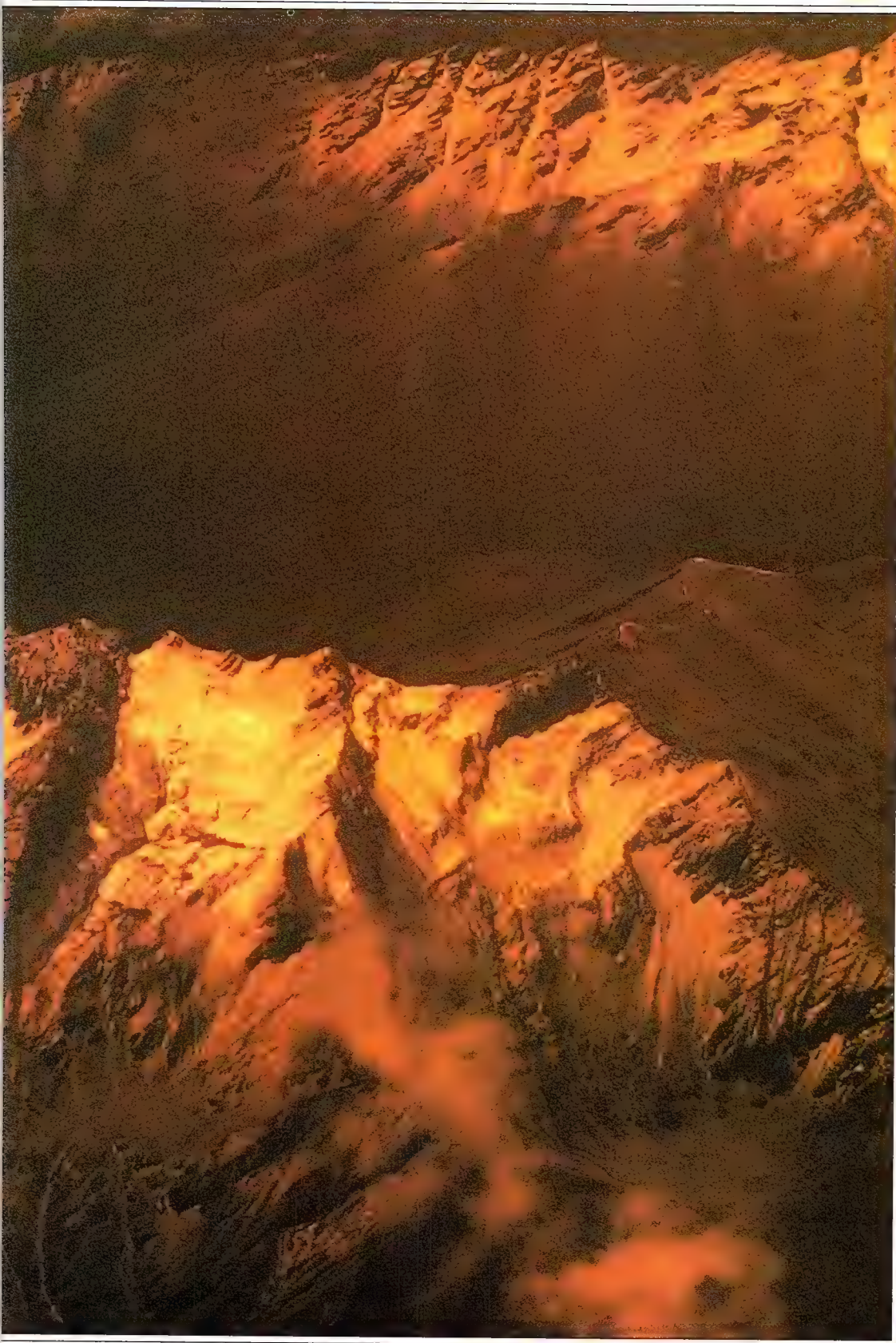
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The Awesome Himalayas





PHOTOGRAPHER:
YU YUNTIAN

Most of the mountains in China with altitudes greater than 5,500 metres are to be found in Tibet, inspiring the description, "the Roof of the World". The Himalayas stretch in a great arc from east to west across the southern border of Tibet with the concentration of the highest peaks rising along the Sino-Nepal-ese border.

The Himalayas have the highest snowline in the world, some 4500 to 6000 metres above sea level, and the range is said to have more than 17,000 glaciers. There is a popular saying in Tibet that one needs four seasons' clothing for a single day. Even in the middle of summer, Tibet is hardly warm throughout, with the mercury in the northern part of the Qiangtang Plateau registering a mere eight degrees Celsius.



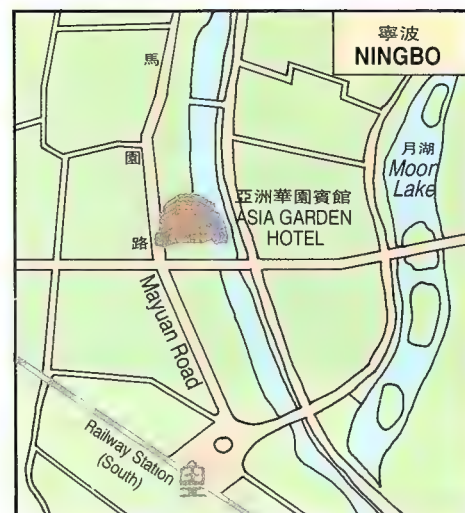
N I N G B O ' S ASIA GARDEN HOTEL



PHOTOS BY ER DONGQIANG

Ningbo, an old port city in eastern Zhejiang, where the Yongjiang and Yaojiang Rivers meet, was once an important stop on the Maritime Silk Road. Today, travellers to Ningbo can stay at the three-star **Asia Garden Hotel**, conveniently located only 500 metres from the train station and eight kilometres from the airport. The guest will appreciate the strategic position of the Asia Garden Hotel near the centre of commerce and close to tourist attractions.

Established in 1987 and housed in a beautiful brown building, the Asia Garden Hotel is Ningbo's first joint-venture hotel with foreign investors. When one enters its spacious lobby, one image that comes to mind is a royal palace. The special ambience of the hotel is also found in its 172 well-appointed rooms and deluxe suites, with just the right touch of comfort and luxury to meet the needs of businessmen and tourists alike. Guests have the choice



of enjoying their favourite dishes at either a Chinese or Western restaurant. The Chinese restaurant offers delicacies from the famous Sichuan and Cantonese cuisines, as well as a wide selection of sumptuous dishes prepared in the Ningbo style. Travellers who have tried the breakfast there will not soon forget the piping hot vegetarian steamed buns, which are a great way to begin your day. The Western restaurant is the ideal venue for a tête-à-tête with a close friend or business associate. White candles and the polite, elegant waitresses from Ningbo add to the romantic atmosphere of this restaurant. But culinary enjoyment is not confined to these two restaurants. A coffee shop, a cocktail lounge and a fast-food centre all provide excellent opportunities to have a quick bite or drink and a chat.

Another outstanding feature of the Asia Garden Hotel is that it provides a full range of facilities and services for businessmen in its business centre and multi-functional rooms. Executives and tourists can conveniently shop on the premises in the hotel's gift shop, supermarket and department stores. And those who want

to relax can be revitalized at the hotel's massage room or have a haircut at the barber shop. Those who want to unwind can play darts in the "Maple House", sing in the karaoke lounge or dance in the discotheque before retiring for the night.

Additional enjoyment can be found simply by sitting relaxed in a white deck chair on the rooftop garden and viewing the panorama typical of the lower reaches of the Yangtse River from this comfortable vantage-point. Or, one may choose to gain a bird's-eye view of boats cruising to and fro past the hotel.

The past year was a successful one for the Asia Garden Hotel, as its occupancy rate reached 98 per cent in 1992. Most of the hotel's guests were tourists. Not content to rest on its laurels, the management of the hotel is constantly striving to improve its quality of service with the goal of ensuring a memorable stay at the hotel.



Asia Garden Hotel

亞洲華園賓館

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Cable: 3234

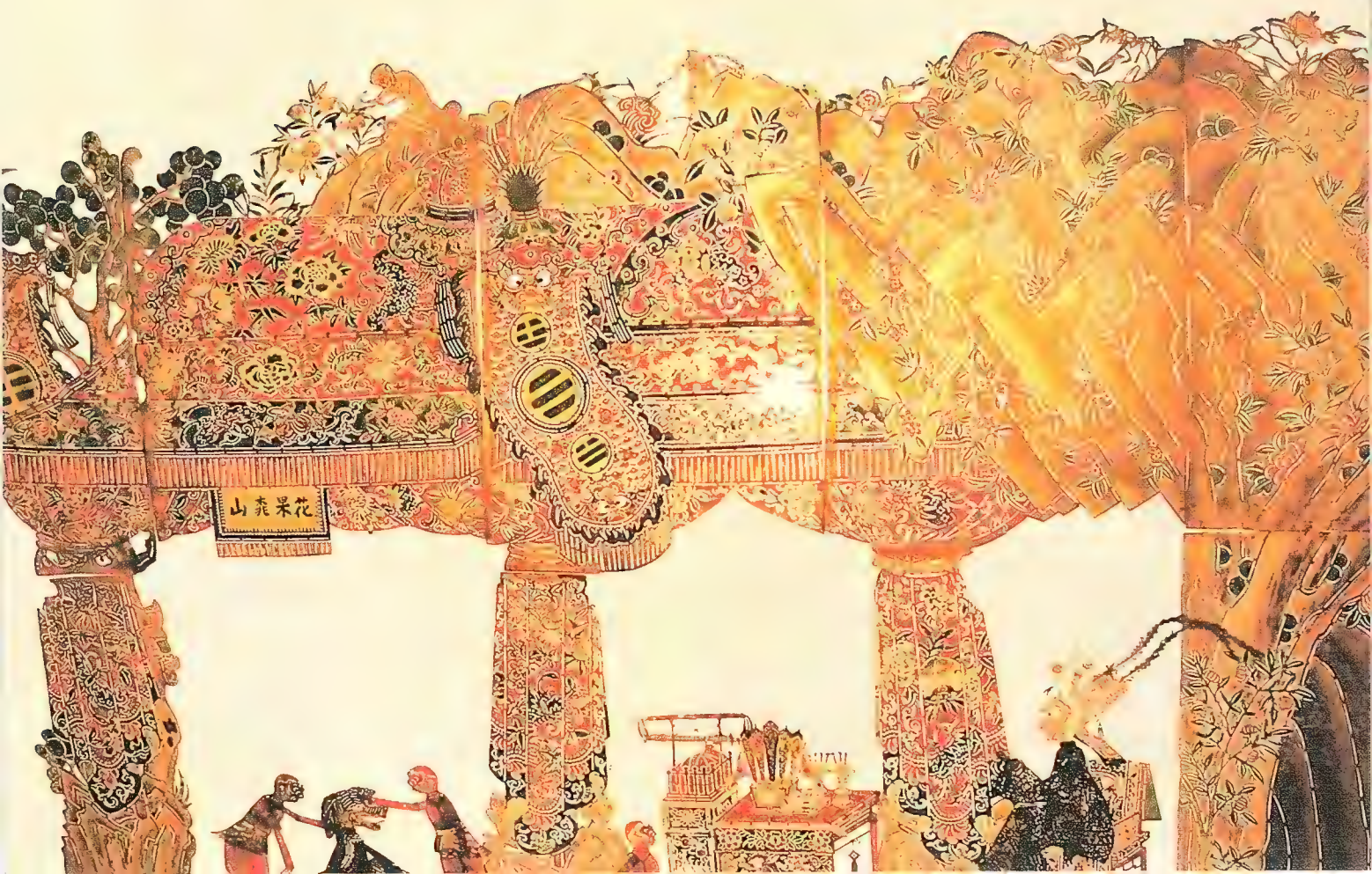


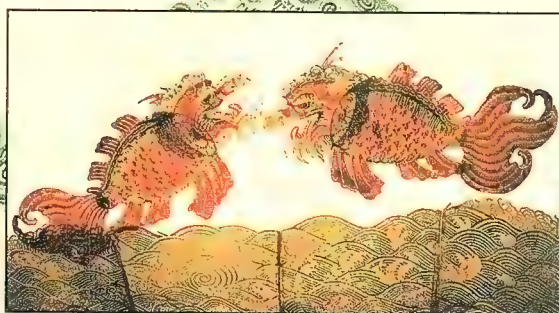
FOR THE
COLLECTOR

A Passion for Shadow Plays

PHOTOS BY LIU GUOZHENG

ARTICLE BY MA NIRANG





4

5

The bright light shines through the large white cloth screen behind which performers holding bamboo sticks manipulate them to make silhouetted figures come alive, moving and gesticulating, as music and song delight the audience.

The figures are puppets made of leather, rubbed thin until almost translucent, carved, jointed to permit movement, and painted for greater expressiveness and effect. They are the 'actors' and 'actresses' of the shadow-play world.

Shadow plays were a relatively well-developed and popular performing art in China as early as the Song dynasty (960-1279).

In the early part of the Yuan dynasty (1271-1368), this easily portable form of entertainment was adopted by the army. Performers went into battle alongside Mongol soldiers during the day and put on shows for them in the evening. Some are said to have accompanied the army as far as Persia.

In the Ming dynasty (1369-1644), shadow plays won the favour of the imperial court and the nobility, making further progress. In 1508 Emperor Wuzong started his immense construction of palaces, sacrificial altars and temples in and around his capital at Beijing. To mark the celebrations, he ordered 'artistes of high calibre from all the provinces and cities to come to the capital' (as reported in the *Annals of the Ming Dynasty*). Those who gathered presented all kinds of variety acts, including shadow plays.

One of the major advantages of shadow plays, of course, is that they need very few people to operate, and they have minimal requirements as regards stage sets and props. Moreover, in feudal times, women of gentle birth were generally forbidden to go to a public theatre. Thus, as the shadow play used a screen which effectively separated the performers from the spectators, imperial and official families approved of it as suitable entertainment for their womenfolk, who could view it in the safety and privacy of their own home.

Some nobles even started to compile their own shadow-play trunks; a trunk generally contained puppets, stage sets and sundry props, all of leather, which could be taken apart and packed flat, as well as the white screen which formed the 'stage'. They also took to employing their own

teams of performers. There was considerable competition between noble families as to the scale and elaborateness of the contents of their shadow-play trunks. By that time there was already a wide variety of roles and themes, and the shadow play had reached a very high level of expertise.

With the coming to power of the Qing dynasty (1644-1911), this popular art soon spread to almost all official and aristocratic families. It can be said that the shadow play was at the zenith of its popularity in the first two hundred years of the Qing dynasty.

Qing officials, both civil and military, were almost all of Manchu nationality. They had language problems with their Han Chinese subjects and could not enjoy local opera and other art forms for the same reason. Besides, they were already totally familiar with the shadow play. When they came from the northeast to assume power, many of them brought their own shadow-play 'troupes' with them. In 1666, eight officials at the Beijing mansion of Prince Li were assigned solely to deal with supervision of his shadow-play trunks. Multiply that over the rest of the country, wherever the Qing court had an official or representative, and you get some idea of the scale of the popularity of this art.

In 1955, a tomb of an official of the Ming dynasty was excavated in Xiaoyi County, Shanxi Province. It contained murals depicting a shadow play being performed. The Palace Museum in Beijing and museums abroad have among their collections sundry items connected with the Chinese shadow play of the Ming and Qing dynasties.

It is time to introduce a present-day exponent. Mr Ma Dechang is a skilled shadow-play performer, but he is also an enthusiastic collector of puppets and everything to do with the art. He is a native of the village of

Ma Dechang — here shown instructing a future generation of performers (1) — counts among his collection a superb Qing-dynasty set of the Mountain of Flowers and Fruit used in a scene from Pigsy Goes in Search of the Monkey King (2). Details of leather sets and characters: a Ming version of the legendary Jiang Ziya (3); a scene from Guanyin Converts the Red Boy to Buddhism (4); and a pair of dragon-fish (5), the latter two from the Qing dynasty.

Gangou, Jingning County, Gansu Province, an area close to southern Ningxia. Shadow plays are one of the traditional folk arts of Gansu, particularly entrenched in the south and east of the province, and the Ma family has long been involved in their performance. Ma Dechang himself started at the age of seven or eight. For a long time, apart from learning how to make the puppets and other objects from leather, he has also made a point of collecting items made by craftsmen of past ages. Pride of place among his collection goes to puppets, settings and props dating from the Ming and Qing dynasties.

Some of these are particularly interesting since they present a combination of the special features of the shadow-play traditions of Gansu and of those of eastern Shaanxi (see CHINA TOURISM no. 101). The puppets are fairly large, archaic and elegant in shape and style; the carving technique is simple and clean-cut, and there is a detailed arrangement of motifs, which are often stereotyped.

Thus figures such as Xuan Zang, Monkey, Pigsy and Sandy — the main characters in the novel *Journey to the West* and beloved subjects for Chinese operas and other performing arts — are executed in a style reminiscent of the folk papercuts of Shaanxi, and are readily recognizable to the audience. The river used in the episode *River Leading to Heaven* is as much as 2.5 metres long, made by sewing individual pieces together with catgut. When a puppet less than twenty centimetres tall ventures into the waves, the audience gets a vivid impression of this enormous, powerful river leading to heaven.

One of the major articles in Ma Dechang's collection is a set for the scene *Pigsy Goes in Search of the Monkey King*, again based on *Journey to the West*. The details are beautiful. Monkey himself is excellent, but look at the Mountain of Flowers and Fruit, his home! This piece is 1.2 metres high and 2.2 metres wide, and it shows the cave palace with meticulously decorated pillars and beams carved with gold patterns. Above the cave entrance are peach trees laden with ripe fruit, among which groups of monkeys play joyfully. This is Monkey's kingdom and even the banners hanging over the front of the cave have monkey faces on them!

In order to add to his collection, Ma Dechang often goes wandering through the villages of Shaanxi and Gansu seeking out owners of shadow-play trunks. Not infrequently, he comes back empty-handed. Once, following directions given by a shadow-play operator, he went on a three-day journey to find the latter's teacher. This man, a true master, had a really rich collection, but — to Mr Ma's disappointment — he refused categorically to sell anything at all. Nevertheless, in the sixty years he has so far devoted himself to the shadow play, Mr Ma has managed to amass some 3,100 items.

Translated by Tsui Lai Hing

Monkey leads his companions along the River Leading to Heaven from the episode of that name, based on *Journey to the West*: these are Qing works (1). A Ming-dynasty ensemble — demons acting as sedan-chair porters (2).



Set Your Sights on Beijing

Beijing, capital of China, is in the northeastern tip of the North China Plain with an area of 16,800 square kilometres. It is the political, economic, cultural and scientific centre of China. The north as well as the northwest of the city which take up 62 per cent of the total area are hilly while the southeast is a plain, occupying the remaining 38 per cent. The climate is continental and temperate. The average temperature in the year is 11.5°C while the annual overall precipitation is 640 mm. June to August being the hot rainy season with 75 per cent of the annual precipitation, the peak seasons for tourists are April and May and especially September and October with clear skies and pleasant temperatures.

The city's population is about 11,000,000, of which 80 per cent live in the urban area. There are ten districts and eight counties under the jurisdiction of Beijing, which is a centrally administered municipality. The city is the hub of transportation for China, linked to the rest of the country by railways, including transcontinental international railways, as well as domestic and international air routes. Coaches are available for long distance travel, linking each county, district and town to the city centre. Commuter trains and subways will take you to any part of the metropolis. Transportation is indeed convenient in Beijing, to say the least.

With a history of over 3,000 years, Beijing has served as the capital of China since the Yuan Dynasty with one result being its rich

historical and cultural legacy. There are a great many famous sights to see, such as the Great Wall, the former Forbidden City or Imperial Palace, and the Temple of Heaven. Beijing has so many attractions that beckon at almost every turn. Needless to say it attracts a large number of tourists to its doorstep.

As a city preserved from ancient times, Beijing is divided into several regions: the old Imperial City with the Forbidden City; the Temple of Heaven and the traditional quadrangles; the scenic Western Hills district containing mainly royal gardens; the Great Wall district with Badaling, Mutianyu and Gubeikou as representative landmarks; the royal mausoleum district containing the underground Ming Tombs; Zhoukoudian district, the site where fossils of Peking Man were unearthed; and the district of ancient temples, which harmoniously combines natural scenery with temple architecture, such as the Tanzhe Monastery, the Jietai Monastery and Yunju Monastery. The above-mentioned sites can be said to encompass the best historic and cultural heritage of the city. In addition, there are the hilly regions, which occupy two-thirds of the total area of the municipality, where yet more historical and cultural sites can be found.

With such an abundance of attractions, Beijing tempts many tourists each year — tourists from all over the world and even more from China itself. The city has over 180 big and small hotels catering for foreign tourists. Various types of restaurants now stand in every street. The menu is international as well as local, offering special culinary delights found only in Beijing. McDonald's Western fast-food is also available and the Kentucky Fried Chicken restaurant attracts many children. However, one should not be distracted by this and miss the chance to eat Beijing Roast Duck. After all, this is the home of this world-famous delicacy.

New as well as existing tourism hotels are being built or enlarged to further promote Beijing as a famed historic and cultural city to tourists. It is projected that tourists from various countries visiting Beijing will number between 2.5-3 million annually by the year 2000.


A network of excellent roads and highways are already making transportation in Beijing more convenient. Presently, the municipality has over 70 flyover crossings or junctions. At the same time, communication with the outside world has been improved with the installation of international direct dialling

telephone facilities linking Beijing with 185 countries and regions around the world. Beijing is now China's biggest communications hub and centre for the gathering and transmitting of information.

The Xixiang highway construction project, begun in 1990, has been completed. This is a network which facilitates transport in the southern part of Beijing. The airport expressway is planned to be finished by October, 1993. The Beijing-Tianjin-Tanggu expressway, which links Beijing with Tianjin, the principal port city of northern China, is already open to traffic. The subway in the Xidan District, one of the busiest parts of Beijing, is being extended eastward as far as the eastern suburb Bawangfen. Beijing now has a subway which circles round the city plus an additional one that will link its eastern part with its western part.

The West Beijing Railway Station — the largest built in China during this century — is now under construction. It will handle more trains, passengers and goods than the present Beijing Railway Station, which daily handles 180 trains coming from both directions. The Beijing Airport has been enlarged to match Beijing as an international metropolis. All this transportation infrastructure is planned to help promote the development of tourism in Beijing. The most noticeable feature of Beijing in recent years is the project for the building of the China Nationalities Culture City, reflecting the traditional culture of China's 56 nationalities.

The culture city will stand by the Yangqi Lake, Huairou County, Beijing, with an area of 280 hectares and a building site area of 15 hectares. The main architecture consists of a central city, villages of the 56 nationalities, amusement centres that reflect the characteristics of each nationality, culture research centres and a centre for scientific, technological and economic exchange. The "residents" of these villages come from the 56 different nationalities. Within the culture city they live according to their own traditions, daily life patterns and customs. They portray their cultures through practice of the customs and traditions as well as through productive activities, athletics, art and literature.

The completion of these and other projects means that the tourism industry of Beijing will scale new heights during the coming weeks, months and years as China's favourite tourist destination becomes more accessible and interesting. 

Translated by He Fei

Major Hotels in Beijing

Beijing Asia-Pacific Building

亞太大廈
8 Yabao Road, Chaoyang District, Beijing
Tel: 5139988 Telex: 222677 JHBLD CN Fax: 5125083
120 furnished apartment suites
Located in the city's central business district
Facilities: Office rental with business centre, shops, karaoke, bar, function rooms, hairdresser, squash court, billiard room, Chinese and Western restaurants, cafeteria, children's playground

Beijing Continental Grand Hotel

北京五洲大酒店
8 Beichen Road East, Sihuan Road North, Andingmenwai, Beijing 100101
Tel: 4915588 Telex: 210564 ICH CN Fax: 4910106
GM: Liu Jianping
Opened August 1990
1,259 rooms Rates: Standard US\$80, luxury US\$90, suite US\$130-300
Located in Asian Games Village, 20 km from airport, 11 km from railway station
Taxi fare to/from airport, Rmb¥80; railway station, Rmb¥30
Facilities: Multi-function conference hall, bar, 6 big restaurants, business centre, beauty salon, karaoke

Beijing Grace Hotel

新萬壽賓館
8 Jiangtai Road West, Chaoyang District, Beijing 100016
Tel: 4362288 Telex: 210599 BJGN CN Fax: 4361818
GM: Zhang Xueshan
Opened 30 August 1990
479 rooms Rates: Single US\$85, double US\$95/120, suite US\$250/350
Located in the city centre near the embassies and with easy access to the airport (17km)
Facilities: Business centre, massage, Chinese physiotherapy centre, souvenir shop, beauty salon, car rental, clinic, restaurants (including Shanghai and Japanese dishes)

Beijing Guotai Hotel

北京國泰飯店
Yong'anxili, Jianguomenwai Avenue, Beijing 100022
Tel: (switchboard) 5013366, 5016237, 5016232
Telex: 210588 GTH CN Fax: 5013926
GM: Li Keming
Opened May 1990
164 rooms and suites Rates: Standard US\$40
Located 25 km from airport, 2.5 km from railway station
Taxi fare to/from airport, Rmb¥70; railway station Rmb¥12
Facilities: Multi-function hall, meeting rooms, in-house movies, beauty salon, several restaurants, bar, cafe

Beijing Hotel

北京飯店
33 Chang'an Avenue East, Beijing 100004
Tel: 5137766 Telex: 22426 BHCTL CN Fax: 5137307
GM: Sun Ji Fu
Opened 1900
871 rooms Rates: Standard US\$110
Located in the city centre, 30 km from airport, 2 km from railway station
Taxi fare to/from airport, US\$20; railway station US\$3
Facilities: Business centre, shopping arcade, coffee shop, bar, billiard room, beauty salon, karaoke, massage, meeting rooms, restaurants (including Guangdong, Sichuan & Japanese dishes), banquet hall

Beijing International Hotel

北京國際飯店
9 Jianguomennei Avenue, Beijing
Tel: 5126688 Telex: 211121 BIH CN Fax: 5129972
GM: Liu Xun Cai
Opened 20 August 1991
1,049 rooms Rates: Standard US\$75-95 (+10%)
Located 30 km from airport, 500 m from railway station
Taxi fare to/from airport, Rmb¥80
Facilities: Business centre, shopping arcade, sports centre with pool, gym, tennis courts, bowling alley, billiard room

Beijing Landmark Towers (formerly Liang Ma Hotel & Apartments)

北京亮馬河大廈(新亮馬酒店·亮馬公寓)
8 Dongsanhuan Road North, Chaoyang District, Beijing 100004
Tel: 5016688 Telex: 210616 LMH CN Fax: 5013513
GM: Liu Yanxi
Opened 7 October 1990
488 rooms and suites Rates: Single US\$45, double US\$60, suite US\$90 (all +10%)
Located 20 km from airport, 10 km from railway station
Facilities: Restaurants, bar, coffee shop, business centre, gym, karaoke, beauty salon, function rooms

The Beijing Mandarin Hotel (formerly Xin Da Du Hotel)

新大都飯店



21 Chegongzhuang Road, Beijing 100044
Tel: 8319988 Telex: 221042 XDDH CN
Fax: 8311818/8322135
GM: Shi Luming
Opened 1990
405 rooms and suites Rates: Single US\$80, double US\$120/130, suite US\$170-1700
Located 30 km from airport, 10 km from railway station
Facilities: More than 10 restaurants, indoor swimming pool, gym, sauna and massage room, beauty salon, electronic games, billiard room, bowling, karaoke disco, business centre

Beijing Mövenpick Hotel/The Capital Resort (Beijing-Airport Mövenpick Radisson Hotel)

北京茂盛賓酒店/度假村
(北京國都大飯店)
Xiao Tianzhu Village, Shunyi County, P.O. Box 6913, Beijing 100621
Tel: 4565588 Telex: 222986 BAMRH CN Fax: 4565678
GM: Thomas A. Kessler
Opened September 1990
427 rooms Rates: Standard US\$70, suite US\$90/110 (all +15%)
Located near Beijing Capital Airport, 3 km from airport, 27 km from railway station
Taxi fare to/from airport, FEC¥13
Facilities: 24-hour business centre, office rental and meeting rooms, tennis courts, indoor pool, gym, jacuzzi, sauna, massage, restaurants (Swiss and Chinese), pub-bar, conference rooms, banquet hall

Beijing New Century Hotel

北京新世紀飯店
Xizhimenwai Dajie, Haidian District, Beijing
Tel: 8313388-52238 Telex: 222375 NCH CN
Fax: 8313388-52405
Opened autumn 1990
936 units (762 rooms)
Facilities: Chinese, Western and Japanese restaurants, bar, swimming pool, sauna, health club, bowling, tennis, billiard room, business centre, shops, disco, beauty salon, multi-purpose hall, office rental

Beijing Overseas Chinese Hotel

北京華僑飯店
5 Santiao Beixinqiao, Eastern District, Beijing 100004
Tel: 4016688 Telex: 210336 BOCH CN Fax: 4012386
GM: Zhang Tianying
Opened 1 October 1954

174 rooms Rates: Standard US\$33, suite US\$50
Located 27 km from airport, 7 km from railway station
Taxi fare to/from airport, FEC¥70, railway station FEC¥25
Facilities: Business centre, beauty salon, disco, restaurants (300 persons)

Beijing Peace Hotel

北京和平賓館
3 Jinyu Hutong, Wangfujing, Beijing 100004
Tel: 5128833 Telex: 222855 PHB CN Fax: 5126863
GM: Liu Yanxi
Opened 28 November 1988
466 rooms Rates: US\$55-800
Located in Wangfujing shopping area in city centre, 30 km from airport, 2 km from railway station
Facilities: Business centre, swimming pool, whirlpool, health club, beauty salon, sauna, disco, massage, shopping arcade, gym, billiard room, karaoke, restaurants

Hotel Beijing-Toronto (Jinglun)

京倫飯店



3 Jianguomenwai Avenue, Beijing 100020
Tel: 5002266 Telex: 210012 JLH CN Fax: 5002022
GM: Masao Yokoo
Opened September 1984
663 rooms and suites Rates: Standard US\$100
Located in city centre, 20 km from airport, 4 km from railway station
Taxi fare to/from airport, FEC¥80
Facilities: Business centre, Chinese and Western restaurants, coffee shop, bar, banquet halls, sauna, gym, indoor swimming pool, massage

Beijing Yanshan Hotel

燕山大酒店



138A Haidian Road, Beijing 100086
Tel: 2563388 Telex: 211203 YSHBJ CN Fax: 2568640
GM: Zhu Cai

Opened February 1989
218 rooms and suites Rates: Standard US\$66, suite US\$110/250, presidential US\$380 (all +10%)
Located in Hadian Economic Zone, 33 km from airport, 18 km from railway station
Taxi fare to/from airport, US\$18
Facilities: Business centre, restaurants and bar, coffee shop, disco, sauna and health club, billiard rooms, beauty salon, shopping arcade, CNN 24-hour news

Capital Hotel
首都賓館
3 Qianmen Street East, Beijing 100006
Tel: 5129988 Telex: 222650 CHB CN Fax: 5120323
GM: Cao Huanlin
500 rooms and suites Rates: Standard US\$110
Located near Tian'anmen Square, 32 km from airport, 3 km from railway station
Taxi fare to/from airport, Rmb¥35
Facilities: Business centre, swimming pool, gym, bowling, billiard room, mini-golf, beauty salon, sauna, massage, 17 restaurants and snack bars (Chinese, Japanese and European), disco, shopping arcade

Capital Mansion
京城大廈
5 Xin Yuan Nan Road, Chaoyang District, Beijing 100027
Tel: 4081114 Telex: 211145 CITIC CN Fax: 483723
241 apartment suites
located on the bank of River Liangma
Facilities: Office rental, conference hall, Chinese, Japanese and Western restaurants, recreation centre with health club, swimming pool, bowling, billiard room, disco and ballroom, clinic, car rental

China World Hotel 中國大飯店
Traders Hotel 國貿飯店
Jianguomenwai Avenue, Beijing 100004
China World Hotel:



Tel: 5052266 Telex: 211206 CWH CN Fax: 5050828
Opened July 1990
743 rooms Rates: US\$180/210
Traders Hotel:



Tel: 5052277 Telex: 222981 THBBC CN Fax: 5050818
Opened December 1989
298 rooms Rates: US\$130
Both hotels:
GM: Brian Harries
Located in China World Trade Centre, 27 km from airport, 3 km from railway station
Facilities: Business centre, conference and banquet rooms,

Chinese, Japanese and Western restaurants, mini-bar, disco, health club, sauna, indoor swimming pool, shopping arcade, bowling, massage, karaoke

Chains City Hotel (formerly New World Tower)
北京城市賓館(新世界賓館)
4 Gongti Road East, Chaoyang District, Beijing 100027
Tel: 5007799 Telex: 210530 NWTBJ CN Fax: 5007668
Opened 25 January 1990
85 hotel rooms and 135 apartment suites Rates: US\$36/48
Located 20 minutes from airport, 15 minutes from railway station
Facilities: Business centre, karaoke, sauna, health club, coffee shop, Chinese, Japanese and Western restaurants, conference rooms, shopping arcade

China Resources Hotel, Beijing
華潤飯店
35 Jianguo Road, Chaoyang District, Beijing 100025
Tel: 5012233 Fax: 5012311
GM: Hans Wiedemann
Opened 6 May 1992
591 rooms and suites Rates: Single/double US\$60-70, suite US\$120-330
Located 30 km from airport, 10 km from railway station
Taxi fare to/from airport, Rmb¥90
Facilities: Business centre, clinic, function room, coffee shop, disco, Chinese restaurant, karaoke, nightclub, swimming pool, billiard room, sauna, massage

CVIK Hotel
賽特飯店
22 Jianguomenwai Avenue, Beijing 100004
Tel: 5123388 Telex: 210689 CTHBC CN Fax: 5123543
GM: Herbert Ma (Deputy)
Opened 8 October 1991
341 rooms and suites Rates: Standard US\$80, suite US\$150-300 (all +10%)
Located 20 km from airport, 1 km from railway station
Facilities: Business centre, health club, billiard room, sauna, beauty salon, swimming pool, shopping arcade, bar, restaurant, conference and functional rooms, Chinese and Western restaurants

Diaoyutai State Guesthouse
釣魚台國賓館
Sanlihe Road, Beijing 100830
Tel: 8513362 Telex: 22798 DYTSC CN Fax: 8513362
GM: Zhu Gui Yu
Opened 1 October 1959
357 rooms Rates: Standard US\$140, suite US\$270-500
Located in western Beijing, 38 km from airport, 12 km from railway station
Facilities: Business services, club with recreational facilities and services

Dragon Spring Mövenpick Hotel Beijing
龍泉賓館
Shuizha Road North, Mentougou, P.O. Box 9083, Beijing 102300
Tel: 9843362, 9843363 Telex: 222292/3 DSHBJ CN Fax: 3014377
GM: Liu Lihua
235 rooms Rates: US\$50
Located 40 km from airport
Facilities: Swimming pool, gym, sauna, tennis court, billiard room, beauty salon, shopping arcade

East Lake Villas
東湖別墅
35 Dongzhimenwai Street, Dongcheng District, Beijing
Tel: 4082221, 4082357 Telex: 211162 BDIAC CN Fax: 4082357
GM: Liu Shiyang
Opened 20 January 1989
138 apartments and 36 villas
Located 22 km from airport, 6 km from railway station

Facilities: Chinese and Western restaurants, pub, coffee shop, beauty salon, massage, sauna, swimming pool, gym, tennis court, billiard room, squash court, mini-market

Exhibition Centre Hotel
北京展覽館賓館
135 Xizhimenwai Dajie, Beijing 100044
Tel: 8316633 Telex: 222395 BECH CN Fax: 8327450
GM: Chris Lu
Opened 15 October 1988
317 rooms and suites Rates: Superior US\$35, suite US\$60/75 (Dec. 92-Mar. 31, 1993)
Located in Exhibition Centre, 32 km from airport, 12 km from railway station
Taxi fare to/from airport, Rmb¥90; railway station Rmb¥36
Facilities: Business centre, meeting rooms, health club, beauty salon, Chinese and Western restaurants, sauna, billiard room, karaoke, massage

Fragrant Hill Hotel, Beijing
北京香山飯店
Liaison Office, Fragrant Hill Hotel, Beijing 100093
Tel: 2565544, 2563601 Telex: 222202 FHH CN Fax: 2566794
Opened April 1983
292 rooms
Facilities: Chinese and Western restaurants, bar, coffee shop, conference rooms, gym, sauna, swimming pool

Friendship Hotel
友誼賓館
3 Baishiqiao Road, Beijing 100873
Tel: 8498888 Telex: 222362 FHBJ CN Fax: 8314661
GM: Zhang Junxiao
Opened 20 September 1954
1,900 rooms
Located in western Beijing, 33 km from airport, 16 km from railway station
Facilities: Convention facilities, health club, disco, billiard room, sauna, indoor and outdoor swimming pools, tennis courts

Gloria Plaza Hotel (formerly Tianping Lee Gardens Hotel, Beijing)
凱萊大酒店(新天平利園酒店)



2 Jianguomennan Avenue, Beijing 100022
Tel: 5158855 Fax: 5158533
GM: Ian Darnbrough
Opened September 1990
423 rooms Rates: Standard US\$100, deluxe US\$120, suite US\$160-500
Located 35 km from airport, 500 m from railway station
Taxi fare to/from airport, US\$20; railway station US\$3
Facilities: Chinese and Vietnamese restaurants, coffee shop, dance hall, bar, swimming pool, sauna, massage, beauty salon

Grand Hotel Beijing (formerly Beijing Hotel Palace Tower)

北京貴賓樓飯店
35 Chang'an Avenue East, Beijing 100006
Tel: 5137788 Telex: 210617 GHB CN Fax: 5130048/49
GM: Wang Quansheng
218 rooms and suites
Rates: Standard US\$180-200, suite US\$280-450
Located in the heart of Beijing, 45 minutes from airport, 5 minutes from railway station
Facilities: Chinese and Western restaurants, bar, function rooms, business centre, health club, sauna, swimming pool, beauty salon, karaoke

The Great Wall Sheraton Hotel

長城飯店
Donghuan Road North, Beijing 100026
Tel: 5005566 Telex: 22002 GWHBJ CN Fax: 5001919
GM: Albert Lo
Opened December 1984
1007 rooms and suites Rates: Superior US\$90-150, suite US\$195-875 (all +15%)
Located in central Beijing, 20 km from airport, 10 km from railway station
Facilities: Business centre, 10 restaurants (French, Sichuan and Cantonese), bar, sauna, beauty salon, health club, mini-golf course, indoor heated swimming pool, tennis court, function rooms and banqueting facilities

The Hademen Hotel Beijing

北京哈德門飯店
A2 Chongwenmenwai Dajie, Beijing 100062
Tel: 7012244 Telex: 210337 HDMHL CN Fax: 7016865
GM: Fan Guoliang
210 rooms Rates: Single US\$22-24, double US\$25-37, suite US\$43-57
Located 33 km from airport, 500 m from railway station
Taxi fare to/from airport, Rmb¥80-100
Facilities: Business centre, Bian Yi Fang Roast Duck Restaurant, disco, coffee shop, beauty salon, meeting room

Holiday Inn Downtown Beijing

北京金都假日飯店
98 Beilishi Road, Xicheng District, Beijing 100037
Tel: 8322288 Telex: 221045 HDTB CN Fax: 8320696
GM: Dominic Wong
Opened mid-1990
347 rooms and suites Rates: Single US\$42, twin US\$52 (Nov.92-Mar.31, 93)
Located 35 km from airport, 13 km from railway station
Taxi fare to/from airport, FEC¥50
Facilities: Business centre, indoor swimming pool, health club, massage, sauna, jacuzzi, banqueting suites, sundry restaurants, incl. Shamiana Indian Restaurant

Holiday Inn Lido Beijing

北京麗都假日飯店
Jichang Road, Jiangtai Road, Beijing 100004
Tel: 4376688 Telex: 22618 LIDOH CN Fax: 4376237/4376540
GM: Andreas Obrist
Opened 15 February 1984
1029 rooms and suites Rates: Standard/superior US\$45-75
Located 17 km from airport, 12 km from railway station
Facilities: 24-hour business centre, banquet and convention facilities, indoor swimming pool, sauna, massage, clinic, beauty salon, disco, karaoke, bowling, indoor and outdoor tennis court, Chinese and Western restaurants, bar, shopping arcade

Hong Kong Macau Center, Swissôtel Beijing

北京港澳中心
Sishitiao Flyover East, Beijing 100027
Tel: 5012288 Telex: 222527 HKMC CN Fax: 5012501
GM: Heinrich Grafe
Opened April 1991
496 rooms Rates: Single/double US\$80, suite US\$125/165
Located in central Beijing, 25 km from airport, 5 km from railway station
Facilities: Health club with heated indoor pool and sundeck, tennis court, business centre, shopping arcade, beauty salon, nightclub, coffee shop, Chinese and Western restaurants, bar, conference and function rooms

Hua Du Hotel

華都飯店
8 Xinyuan Road South, Chaoyang District, Beijing 100004
Tel: 5001166 Telex: 22028 HUADU CN Fax: 5001615
GM: Liu Zhitong
522 rooms Rates: US\$40-100
Located 21 km from airport, 6 km from railway station
Facilities: 13 restaurants and banquet halls, bar, clinic, billiard room, disco

International Culture Exchange Centre

國際文化交流中心大廈
14 Dongzhimen Street South, Dongcheng District, Beijing 100027
Tel: 5007722 Telex: 211262 ICEC CN Fax: 4082231
Opened in 1991
280 rooms and suites Rates: US\$85-290
Located 20 km from airport, 4 km from railway station
Facilities: Business centre, Chinese and Western restaurants, bar, disco, swimming pool, gym, sauna, beauty salon, shopping arcade

Jade Palace Hotel

翠宮飯店
76 Zhichun Road, Shuangyushu, Haidian District, Beijing 100086
Tel: 2564422 Telex: 222886 JPH CN Fax: 2561447
GM: Zhao Songhua
Opened 7 September 1987
145 rooms and suites Rates: US\$30
Located in northwest of the city, 33 km from airport, 17 km from railway station
Taxi fare to/from airport, Rmb¥66, railway station Rmb¥34
Facilities: Business centre, Chinese restaurant, bar, billiard room, beauty salon

Jianguo Hotel, Beijing

建國飯店
5 Jianguomenwai Avenue, Beijing 100020
Tel: 5002233 Telex: 22439 JCHBJ CN Fax: 5002871
461 rooms and suites Rates: Standard US\$115
Located near diplomatic quarter in city's business district, 27 km from airport, 3 km from railway station
Taxi fare to/from airport, US\$20
Facilities: Business centre, Chinese, Western and Japanese restaurants, banquet hall, bar, indoor heated swimming pool, airport shuttle bus

Ji Men Hotel

箭門飯店
College Road, Haidian District, Beijing
Tel: 2012211 Telex: 222325 JMH CN Fax: 2015355
300 rooms and suites
Facilities: Restaurant, bar, shop, billiard room, conference room

Jingfeng Hotel

京豐賓館
71 Fengtai Road, Beijing 100071
Tel: 3812233 Telex: 22548 JFH CN Fax: 3813307
569 rooms
Located 48 km from airport, 3 km from railway station
Taxi fare to/from airport, Rmb¥50
Facilities: Conference rooms, auditorium, restaurants, beauty salon, shopping arcade

Jing Guang New World Hotel

京廣新世界飯店
Huijialou, Chaoyang District, Beijing 100020
Tel: 5018888 Telex: 210489 BJGC CN Fax: 5013333
GM: Brian Leong
Opened 18 June 1990
492 rooms Rates: US\$110-450
Located in eastern Beijing, 26 km from airport, 7 km from railway station
Facilities: Cantonese and Chaozhou restaurants, karaoke, beauty salon, clinic, shopping arcade, gym, function rooms

Kunlun Hotel

崑崙飯店
2 Xinyuan Road South, Chaoyang District, Beijing 100004
Tel: 5003388 Telex: 210327 BJKLH CN Fax: 5003228

GM: Lu Haiyan
Opened 26 November 1988
934 rooms Rates: Standard US\$110, suite US\$200-1000
Located in the eastern part of the city, 17 km from airport, 8 km from railway station
Facilities: Business centre, banquet halls, function hall, revolving restaurant (Western) and Chinese restaurants, coffee shop, bars, karaoke, sauna, beauty salon, billiard room, shopping arcade, disco, outdoor tennis court, indoor swimming pool

Le You Hotel

樂游飯店
13 Dongsanhuan Road South, Chaoyang District, Beijing
Tel: 784752, 784761 Telex: 20078 PDTCO CN
Fax: 7711363
160 rooms
Facilities: Chinese and Japanese restaurants, disco, bars

Ming Yuan Hotel

明苑賓館
Huzhuang, Shisanling, Beijing
Tel: 9746831 Telex: 222486 BMYH CN
GM: Duan Duo
140 rooms and suites Rates: FEC¥100-280
Located 42 km northwest of the city, in the scenic Ming Tombs area, 49 km from airport, 8 km from railway station
Facilities: Coffee shop, bar, disco, sauna, billiard room, clinic, shopping arcade, beauty salon, Chinese and Western restaurants

Minzu Hotel Beijing

北京民族飯店



51 Fuxingmennei Dajie, Beijing 100046
Tel: 6014466 Telex: 22990/22991 MZHTL CN
Fax: 6014849
GM: Qi Yanzong
615 rooms and suites Rates: FEC¥195
Located 37 km from airport, 5 km from railway station
Taxi fare to/from airport, FEC¥60
Facilities: Chinese, Western and Japanese restaurants, banquet hall, conference room, beauty salon, gym, billiard room, car rental

Hotel New Otani Chang Fu Gong

長富宮飯店
26 Jianguomenwai Avenue, Chaoyang District, Beijing 100022
Tel: 5125555 Telex: 222936 BCFGH CN Fax: 5139813
GM: Kunihiko Mizuno
Opened 1 September 1989
512 rooms Rates: US\$110-140
Located 35 km from airport, 500 m from railway station
Facilities: Business centre, 6 banquet/conference rooms, Chinese, Western and Japanese restaurants, coffee shop, health club, gym, indoor pool, tennis courts, sauna, beauty salon, shopping arcade

Olympic Hotel Beijing

北京奧林匹克飯店
52 Baishiqiao, Haidian District, Beijing 100081
Tel: 8316688 Telex: 222749 OLHTL CN Fax: 8318390
338 rooms and suites Rates: US\$95-400
Located in western part of city close to Capital Gymnasium and National Library, 45 minutes from airport

Facilities: Restaurants, bar, 24-hour business centre, Chinese physiotherapy centre, souvenir shop, beauty salon, bar

The Palace Hotel

王府飯店



Goldfish Lane, Wangfujing, Beijing 100006
Tel: 5128899 Telex: 222696 PALBJ CN Fax: 5129050
GM: Han C.A. Brouwers
Opened 1 March 1989
77 rooms and suites Rates: Deluxe US\$200/240, superior US\$220/260, suite \$290-2200 (+15%)
Located in the centre of Beijing, between two main shopping streets, Wangfujing and Dongdan, and close to the major commercial, diplomatic and government offices, 35 km from airport
Facilities: French, Italian, German, Cantonese, Sichuan and Japanese restaurants, coffee house, bar, nightclub, billiard room, banqueting and conference facilities, disco, florist, health club, swimming pool, business centre, executive floors, beauty salon

The Park Hotel Beijing

北京樂酒店

6 Puhuangyu Road, Beijing 100075
Tel: 7212233 Telex: 22968 PARK CN Fax: 7211615
GM: Dai Lihua
Opened 3 August 1987
88 rooms
Located in southern Beijing, 40 km from airport, 5 km from railway station

Arkview Tiantan Hotel, Beijing

壇飯店

Tiyuguan Road, Chongwen District, Beijing 100061
Tel: 7012277 Telex: 221034 TTH CN Fax: 7016833
GM: Methew M.H. Ng
Opened 19 September 1990
100 rooms and suites
Located 35 km from airport, 3 km from railway station
Facilities: Chinese and Western restaurants, karaoke, shopping arcade, gym, sauna, massage, billiard room, beauty salon, mini-bar, business centre

Jianmen Hotel

京前門飯店

5 Yong'an Road, Beijing 100073
Tel: 3016688 Telex: 222382 QMHTL CN Fax: 3013883
GM: Wang Changjun
Opened 26 July 1956
100 rooms and suites Rates: US\$92
Located 15 km from airport, 7 km from railway station
Facilities: Restaurants, Liyuan Theatre, conference rooms, bar, karaoke

Jinghuayuan Hotel

華園賓館

Chengfu Road, Haidian District, Beijing 100083
Tel: 2566611 Telex: 210233 Fax: 2562421
100 rooms and suites
Facilities: Conference rooms, coffee shop, 4 restaurants, banquet halls, bar, karaoke, shopping arcade

Imada Asia Hotel Beijing

京華美達亞洲大酒店

Xinzhong Street West, Gongti Road North, Beijing
Tel: 5007788 Telex: 210597 AHR CN Fax: 5008091
GM: Werner R. Schmidt
Opened 28 August 1990
100 rooms and 28 suites Rates: US\$120-600

Located in eastern part of city, convenient to embassy and business districts, 30 minutes from airport
Taxi fare to/from airport, US\$5
Facilities: Chinese, Mediterranean and Korean restaurants, coffee shop, disco, health club, beauty salon, banqueting and meeting facilities, business centre

Sara Hotel Beijing (formerly Huaqiao Dasha)

華僑大廈

2 Wangfujing Avenue, Beijing 100004
Tel: 550487 Telex: 210453 PUOMA CN Fax: 5130064
Opened October 1991
402 rooms

SAS Royal Hotel Beijing

北京皇家大飯店



6A Beisanhuan Road East, Beijing 100028
Tel: 4663388 Telex: 211241 SASZH CN Fax: 4653186
GM: Hans J. Henk
Opened 15 September 1992
374 rooms and suites Rates: Standard US\$60, Royal Club room US\$90
Located 20 km from airport, 10 km from railway station
Facilities: Conference and banqueting facilities, indoor swimming pool, 8 meeting rooms, squash courts, sauna, massage, business centre, ballroom, Chinese (Sichuan and Guangdong) and Western restaurants

Shangri-La Hotel, Beijing

北京香格里拉飯店

29 Zizhuyuan Road, Beijing 100081
Tel: 8412211 Telex: 222231 SHABJ CN Fax: 8418002/3/6
GM: Michael Branchett
Opened October 1986
786 rooms and suites Rates: Superior US\$130, deluxe US\$150/180, suite US\$300-800 (all +15%)
Located 35 km from airport, 15 km from railway station
Facilities: Chinese and Western restaurants, coffee shop, bar, disco, gym, sauna, massage, swimming pool, banqueting and meeting rooms, business centre, karaoke

Taiwan Hotel, Beijing

台灣飯店

5 Jinyu Hutong, Wangfujing North, Beijing 100006
Tel: 5136688 Telex: 210543 TWHTL CN Fax: 5136896
Opened May 1990
268 rooms and 14 suites Rates: US\$80-250
Located in the city centre, 30 km from airport, 2 km from railway station
Facilities: Business centre, health club, beauty salon, shopping arcade, clinic, function and banqueting rooms, Chinese and Western restaurants

Tianlun Dynasty Hotel

天倫王朝飯店

50 Wangfujing Avenue, Beijing 100006

Tel: 5138888 Telex: 210575 TLH CN Fax: 5137866
Opened Autumn 1990
408 rooms and suites Rates: Standard US\$62, suite US\$105/140 (all +10%)

Located in the commercial centre near the Forbidden City, 35 km from airport, 6-7 km from railway station
Facilities: Conference rooms, banquet rooms, business centre, meeting rooms, tennis courts, billiard room, disco, swimming pool, 7 restaurants (including Western, Vietnamese, Guangdong and Mongolian)

Xiyuan Hotel, Beijing

北京西苑飯店

1 Sanlihe Road, Beijing
Tel: 8313388 Telex: 22831-22835 XYH CN Fax: 8314577
GM: Li Hong
Opened August 1984
709 rooms
Located 30 km from airport, 10 km from railway station
Taxi fare to/from airport, FEC¥100; railway station FEC¥30
Facilities: Indoor swimming pool, gym, sauna, beauty salon, massage, clinic, Chinese and Western restaurants, business centre, shopping arcade, karaoke, banquet room

Yanjing Hotel

燕京飯店

19 Fuxingmenwai Avenue, Beijing 100046
Tel: 8326611 Telex: 20028 YJHTL CN Fax: 8326130
GM: Wen Xiangyun
Opened 1981
509 rooms Rates: Standard US\$42, suite US\$53
Located 38 km from airport, 4 km from railway station
Taxi fare to/from airport, Rmb¥100, railway station Rmb¥10
Facilities: Bar, Chinese and Western restaurants, meeting rooms, ballroom, shopping arcade, coffee shop

Yanxiang Hotel

燕翔飯店

A2 Jiangtai Road, Dongzhimenwai, Beijing
Tel: 5006666 Telex: 210014 YXH CN Fax: 5006231
515 rooms and suites
Located 15 km from city centre, 17 km from airport
Facilities: Chinese and Western restaurants, business centre, conference rooms, swimming pool, billiard room, beauty salon, massage, shopping arcade, coffee shop, bar, sauna

Yong'an Hotel

永安賓館

5A National Agricultural Exhibition Hall Road North, Beijing 100026
Tel: 5011188 Telex: 211177 YAH CN Fax: 5015634
GM: Zhang Sanzheng
Opened September 1987
304 suites Rates: US\$1200/month
Located 24 km from airport, 9.1 km from railway station
Facilities: Banquet halls, bar, karaoke, business centre, gym, sauna, billiard room, clinic

Zhaolong Hotel

兆龍飯店

2 Workers' Stadium Road North, Chaoyang District, Beijing 100027
Tel: 5002299 Telex: 210079 ZLH CN Fax: 5003319
GM: Zhao Zenghui
Opened 25 October 1985
261 rooms and suites Rates: Single US\$60, double US\$70, suite US\$127-1000
Located 24 km from airport, 10 km from railway station
Facilities: Chinese and Western restaurants, sauna, swimming pool, beauty salon, massage, business centre, meeting rooms, bar, coffee shop

Ziwei Hotel-Beijing

北京紫微賓館

40 Shijingshan Road North, Beijing 100043
Tel: 8202104 Telex: 222619 ZWH CN Fax: 8202103
GM: Chen Kejin
Opened 28 September 1987
180 rooms Rates: Standard US\$20, double US\$33, suite US\$40/55
Located 43 km from airport, 25 km from railway station
Facilities: Chinese and Western restaurants, coffee shop, bar, disco, banquet hall, conference rooms

The Flavour of Sichuan

Found in Teahouses and

Hot-Pot Restaurants

Tourists who venture to Sichuan and visit Mount Emei, the Giant Buddha at Leshan and Jiuzhaigou and other interesting destinations would have missed some of the essence of Sichuan if during their stay they have not enjoyed some leisure time in a Chengdu teahouse or sampled a spicy hot-pot dish in Chongqing.

A Pleasure in Chengdu's Teahouses

It is said that the world's biggest teahouse is in China, China's biggest teahouse in Sichuan and Sichuan's biggest teahouse, in turn, is in Chengdu. The city of Chengdu, the province's capital, is also the centre of tea drinking. Teahouses are ubiquitous in Chengdu; hardly a street, lane, park, and scenic spot is without at least a few. These establishments are very much a part of social life in the city, as they are venues for relaxation, entertainment and business appointments.

Regardless of size and location, furnishings in Sichuan's teahouses are virtually standard: stools, armchairs and tea stands made of bamboo which have a distinct Sichuan style. During an interlude of your journey, a visit to one of these teahouses provides an excellent opportunity to learn about the life and customs of the local people while pleasantly sipping delicious and fragrant tea. While refreshing oneself, one can listen and learn.

And it is easy on your travel budget as well. In most teahouses, the minimum charge would be about one yuan. There are no time constraints. Patrons can arrive early in the morning and stay until closing time if they wish. The waiter keeps adding water to your cup without extra charge, provided you do not quit your table. Your bamboo armchair is your chartered seat for the day, so to speak.

In the parks and scenic spots, the teahouses are usually spacious and often set in elegant environs. An example of just such a

teahouse is the one located in the People's Park in Chengdu. Erected at the centre of an artificial lake surrounded with green willows, it is a large structure of considerable age. Another teahouse found in a garden south of the Zhuge Liang Memorial Hall closely resembles structures characteristic of Suzhou's gardens. The distinguishing feature of this particular establishment is its chairs — the most comfortable in all of Sichuan. When visiting the River Viewing Tower here, while taking in the beautiful scenery of the lake, you can leisurely imbibe the renowned Xuetao Tea at Wangjianglou (River Viewing Tower) Teahouse tucked in the corner of a bamboo grove. Or, should you feel energetic, you can take your cup of tea and venture into the bamboo thickets and get closer to nature while sipping the refreshing beverage.

In addition to tea, some of the teahouses also offer snacks such as peanuts, sunflower seeds and fried broad beans as well as hot and sour spicy noodles, which cost but a few yuan.



Innumerable teahouses can be found in Chengdu, where people can relax, entertain, sleep or chat away a whole day (by Lin Yiping)

Hot Fun in Chongqing's Summer


If teahouses epitomize socializing in Chengdu, then hot-pot shops in Chongqing in their own way are analogous institutions. Wherever one goes in Chongqing, one can find hot-pot restaurants which are packed full the year round. It is an irony of sorts for outsiders to observe people perspiring profusely while eating hot-pots during the inferno that is summer in Chongqing, one of China's hottest cities. Herein lies a major difference in the hot-pot eating habits of the natives of Chongqing from those of people elsewhere in the country. For example, Beijing's natives enjoy hot-pot mutton in wintertime, while Guangdong's inhabitants confine the eating of Guangdong's chafin dishes to the last month of the lunar year again in winter. Sichuanese, on the other hand, consider it most interesting to enjoy a spicy hot-pot dish in the summer, when the

Major Restaurants in Chengdu/Chongqing in Sichuan Province

City	Name	Address	Specialties
Chengdu	Chengdu Restaurant	Shangdong Dajie	Sichuan dishes and snacks
	Furong Restaurant	Renmin Road South	Sichuan dishes and snacks
	Yaohua Restaurant	Chunxi Road West	Sichuan food, Western dishes
	Tongrentang Restaurant	Dongda Street	Medicinal dishes
	Xiangzhaitang Restaurant	Wenshuyuan	Vegetarian food
	Huixiang Restaurant	Hongxing Road (3rd section)	Moslem food
	Xiangxuehai Restaurant	Dongyu Street	Cantonese dishes, tea, dessert
	Zhongshuijiao Restaurant	Tidu Street	Sichuan dumplings
	Dandanmian Restaurant	Tidu Street	Sichuan's dandan noodles
	Chen Mapo Bean Curd Restaurant	Yulong Street West	Sichuan's bean curd in local piquant sauce
	Sanyiyuan Restaurant	Shangdong Dajie	Beef pancake
	Yuexiangcun Restaurant	Bayi Road	Sichuan dishes and snacks
Chongqing	Xiaodongtian Restaurant	Jiaochangkou	Sichuan dishes and snacks
	Lugaojian Restaurant	Zourong Road	Suzhou dishes
	Jiefangbei Restaurant	Zourong Road	Jiangsu and Zhejiang food
	Guanshengyuan Restaurant	Minquan Road	Guangdong dishes and dessert
	141 Restaurant	Bao'an Road	Hot-pot dishes
	Wangyazi Restaurant	Bao'an Road	Roast Duck
	Sixiangcun Restaurant	Zourong Road	Steamed stuffed buns
	Northern Restaurant	Zourong Road	Moslem beef, northern dumplings

Notes on Visiting the Nanxi River

temperature in Sichuan can reach 38°C. One of the rationales given for this preference of hot weather is explained as "dispelling heat with heat". In other words, to reduce body heat, after eating a spicy meal and breaking out in a good sweat, by then returning home to bathe, then one can feel cool and relaxed by natural means, a healthier method of beating the heat than sitting in an air-conditioned room. The distinctive feature of Sichuan's hot-pot courses, like that of Sichuanese cuisine in general, is its spicy taste. The active ingredient of the sauce, of course, is chilli, but variety is provided by adding Chinese prickly ash, and pepper as well as wine, ginger, salt, sesame oil, eggs, vinegar and more. A potpourri of condiments are added, but typically ox tripe, slices of fish and pork, pig kidneys, goose intestines and vegetables are used. Another distinctive feature of Sichuanese hot-pot is the preparation method of the food materials mentioned above, especially the meat. Before eating, one must rinse the food in boiling water several times, each time not exceeding one second in length, to get just the right taste and texture.

Today, the hot-pot restaurants in Chongqing number about one thousand. Bayi Road (formerly known as Bao'an Road) in the city centre has traditionally served as the city's "Food Street", in which shops which offer a variety of Sichuan courses and snacks are concentrated. The majority of the shops flanking the street are hot-pot restaurants. Among these establishments, one known as *Yi Si Yi* (141) is particularly popular. But business is brisk for all of the restaurants in this hot-pot hot spot the year round. 

A cupboard of ingredients such as chilli, goose intestines, slices of lotus root and a variety of vegetables is ready for the famous hot-pot dishes of Chongqing (by Chen Jin).



Situated in Yongjia County in southeastern Zhejiang Province, its hills, waterfalls and crystal-clear river water make the Nanxi River Scenic Area one of the more interesting and restful tourist spots in China.

Transport The most commonly travelled route starts from Wenzhou City. One can take the ferry from Anlanting wharf to reach Qingshuibu via the Oujiang River. Then one can proceed by bus to Shangtang Town, Yongjia's county seat.

For visiting Wenzhou by plane, there are two flights between Wenzhou and Hong Kong (Wednesday and Saturday). More frequent service is enjoyed between Wenzhou and Shenzhen (Tuesday, Thursday, Friday and Saturday), Guangzhou (Tuesday, Thursday, Friday and Sunday), and Hangzhou (daily).

Alternatively, tourists can reach the Nanxi River Scenic Area by taking the long-distance buses from Hangzhou, Yueqing, Jinyun or Xianju to Yongjia.

Tour As it is just a newly opened scenic area, the tourist facilities at present are still undergoing development. To ensure travel convenience, it is suggested that tourists contact the local tourist department or travel agencies who will arrange special itineraries of the Nanxi River for them.

(Yongjia County Tourist Company, Add: 72 Zhenqianlu, Shangtang Town, Yongjia, Zhejiang Tel: 23836)

Suggested Tours

Usually, a three-day tour is arranged to visit the Nanxi River. The typical tour is outlined below:

First Day Yongjia County Seat (Shangtang Town) — Taipingyan Scenic Area — Cangpo Village — Nanxi River on bamboo raft — Lion Crag — Furong (Hibiscus) Village

Tourists take a bus from Shangtang Town to Taipingyan Scenic Area, where they can view precipitous cliffs and visit old temples. Then it is on to Cangpo Village where antique houses, ancient temples, pavilions and ponds and a cypress tree alive since the Song Dynasty can be seen.

The topography and design of Cangpo Village is like the "four treasures of the study" with the Bijia (Penholder) Hill on the right. The "four treasures" here are the long streets paved with bricks and stones representing the writing brush, a five-metre-long stone pillar as the ink stick, two ponds on the east and west ends analogous to ink

slabs and the village surrounded by the walls built of cobblestones resembling paper.

After visiting Cangpo Village, tourists can take bamboo rafts and descend along the Nanxi River to inspect the old villages and the surrounding dense forests and waterfalls. Later, they can visit the Lion Crag and the Furong (Hibiscus) Village which resembles a small fort arranged in a layout described as "seven stars and eight dippers". The "stars" are actually the square terraces located at intersections and the dippers are the ponds at the confluences of the ditches in the village.

Second Day Daruoyan Scenic Area — Lion Crag — Xiaoruoyan — Shimen Terrace — Jiuji Waterfalls — Taogong Cave — Shi'er (Twelve) Peaks — Baizhang Waterfall

Early in the morning of the second day, the tour starts at the Daruoyan Scenic Area and the Xiaoruoyan Scenic Area, the latter of which is a stone cellar hidden among the prevailing topography of precipitous cliffs and deep valleys. The Jiuji (Nine) Waterfalls on the Shimen Terrace nearby are also worth a visit. These waterfalls are a combination of nine waterfalls having the same source, hence the name.


The next spot will be the Taogong Cave. This cave is dedicated to Tao Hongjing (456-536) who once lived there and was a hermit and a great scholarly compiler of Taoist texts during the Southern Dynasty (420-589).

About 1.5 kilometres west of the cave, one can see the Shi'er (Twelve) Peaks which actually are twelve stone pillars rising high above the ground. At the rear of the peaks is the most spectacular waterfall in all of Zhejiang Province — Baizhang Waterfall, cascading from a height of 123 metres.

Third Day Stone Mast Hill Scenic Area — Lesser Three Gorges

This day starts with a visit to the Stone Mast Hill situated in Xia'ao Village. This hill is some 306 metres high and surrounded by water on three sides. Then we take a small boat and descend to the Water Fairy Maiden Cave and the Lesser Three Gorges.

If the travellers still have some time, it is suggested that they visit the Yandang Mountains to where buses can be taken directly from the county seat of Yongjia.

Lodging: Lion Crag Hotel in Shiziyan (Lion Crag) or Qingshuibu Hotel in Qingshuibu Tel: 32525. 



The Great Wall at Badaling follows closely the lay of the land (by Chan Yat Nin).

Selected Highlights of Beijing

Beijing, serving as the capital of China during the Yuan, Ming and Qing Dynasties, offers what is probably the greatest number of noteworthy tourist sites of any city in the world. Recently, an appraisal committee of experts from the fields of archaeology, tourism, culture, architecture, history and education selected those particular sites which they believed to be the capital's most important tourist attractions. The top ten sites thus honoured are: The Great Wall, the Forbidden City, the Temple of Heaven, Tian'anmen Square, the Beihai Park, the Summer Palace, the Big Bell Temple, the Ming Tombs, the Zhoukoudian Archaeological Site and the Yunju Temple. These attractions make up a roster that would be hard to match in terms of historical and cultural significance; however, they are only a very small part of the fascinating and important places to see and visit while in Beijing.

The **Great Wall**, measuring 6,700 kilometres in length, is one of the most impressive structures in the world. The Chinese started construction of the wall as early as the Spring and Autumn Period (770-476 B.C.). Qin Shihuang, the first ruler to unify China during the Qin Dynasty (221-207 B.C.), is generally given credit for the project because of his efforts in linking various segments of the wall together. A vast number of wall sections still exist in China today. The sections of the wall that are visited today date mostly from the Ming Dynasty.

Second on the list is the **Forbidden City**, the Imperial Palace during the Ming and Qing Dynasties. It is the preeminent symbol of traditional China and the biggest and best preserved masterpiece of classical Chinese architecture. Construction of this structure took place for fourteen years during the reign of the Ming Dynasty emperor Yongle (reign dates 1403-1424). The entire palace grounds consist of two complexes, the outer and the inner courtyards. They contain six main halls and many smaller pavilions and buildings. It was the residence of twenty-four emperors during the Ming and Qing Dynasties.

The **Big Bell Temple** made it to the top ten on the strength of its bell — Yongle Bell, one of the largest in the world which is decorated with more Buddhist sutra inscriptions than any other bell. It contains 227,000 Chinese characters written on both the inside and outside surfaces of the bell. The bell itself, cast in 1420, is 6.75 metres high and 3.3 metres in diameter. It weighs 46.5 tons.

A surprise entry is the last one on the list — the **Yunju Temple** in Beijing's Fangshan District. Few guide-books mention it. Tracing its history back to the late Sui Dynasty (581-618), Yunju Temple is believed to house the largest collection of stelae in the world. The monks of the temple began engraving scriptures onto stone tablets in 605 and continued the task down through the years,

so that there is a total of 14,277 stelae stored in the nine caves of the Stone Scripture Hill.

Catholic Churches Combine East and West

As most tourists come to Beijing to visit such historically and culturally significant sites which represent the apex of Chinese tradition, they might be surprised to learn that scattered around the capital are fourteen Roman Catholic churches whose architecture is predominantly Western, but which also have been stamped with the mark of Chinese culture. The most fascinating marriage of east and west is the thirty-metre-tall Xishiku Church near Xi'anmen, flanked between two pavilions built according to Chinese traditional style. Designed in 1704 by French missionaries, the church was modelled after the famous Notre Dame Cathedral in Paris with a Gothic architectural style. Many features and motifs found in Chinese art and architecture, however, have been incorporated. Two large stone lions have been set in front of the church and some sixty smaller ones are on the winding stone railings. From the two side walls of the church itself protrude seven stone dragon heads with their mouths open which are designed to siphon off water. The synthesis of Western and Chinese art is also evident on the statue of the Virgin Mary in the flowered courtyard of the church. Here Mary is clad in a Chinese style white gown and a blue belt. Standing amidst the rocks she has an expression on her face radiating tranquillity which calls to mind the image of the Bodhisattva Guanyin, or Goddess of Mercy, who is also often depicted clad in white.

Other Catholic churches with a similar synthesis of Chinese and Western archi-

The enormous bell in the Big Bell Temple (by Wang Wenbo)






Gothic architecture in a Chinese setting — the Xishiku Church in Beijing (by Luo Wenfa)

Xishiku Cathedral was the first to be renovated starting in 1985.

Cherry Valley: An Idyllic Retreat

If one wishes to escape from the hustle and bustle of the crowds while in Beijing, one need go no further than the Cherry Valley Nature Reserve in the western suburbs of Beijing, only a few minutes' walk westward from the Fragrant Hills. Cherry Valley, covering an area of 406 hectares, is a botanical wonderland as more than 300 kinds of trees, bushes, herbs and flowers grow naturally here. Such rare tree species as metasequoias, ginkgoes and diversiform-leaved poplars have lived here for millennia. It is therefore not surprising that Cherry Valley has been recommended for special protection.

Cherry Valley is much more than an idyllic place to study nature. Like Beijing itself, it also has a rich historical tradition and boasts a number of historical sites. The Jin Dynasty emperor Zhangzong (reign dates 1190-1208) set up a pavilion for watching flowers. During the Ming Dynasty, more than ten temples were established and many trees and flowers, especially cherry trees, were planted, giving the valley its present name. 

Architecture include the South Cathedral at Xuanwumen and the Dongtang Cathedral on Wangfujing Avenue, which are rendered in Romanesque architecture. Upon closer inspection, one can detect many Chinese influences in the art of these two and many other churches. It is only in recent years that many of these grand structures have been refurbished after many years of neglect.

Sichuan's Cities and Counties Open to Foreign Tourists

Barkam C	馬爾康縣	Nanxi C	南溪縣
Changning C	長寧縣	Neijiang	內江市
Chengdu	成都市	Panzhihua	攀枝花市
Chongqing	重慶市	Shizhu Tujia	石柱土家
Daxian	達縣市	AC	族自治縣
Daxian C	達縣	Songpan C	松潘縣
Deyang	德陽市	Suining	遂寧市
Fengdu C	酆都縣	Wanxian	萬縣市
Fengjie C	奉節縣	Wanxian C	萬縣
Fuling	涪陵市	Wenchuan C	汶川縣
Gongxian C	珙縣	Wushan C	巫山縣
Guang'an C	廣安縣	Wuxi C	巫溪縣
Guangyuan	廣元市	Xichang	西昌市
Jiang'an C	江安縣	Xingwen C	興文縣
Langzhong	閬中市	Ya'an	雅安市
Leshan	樂山市	Yibin	宜賓市
Liangping C	梁平縣	Yibin C	宜賓縣
Lixian C	理縣	Yunyang C	雲陽縣
Luzhou	瀘州市	Zhongxian C	忠縣
Maoxian C	茂縣	Zigong	自貢市
Mianyang	綿陽市		
Mingshan C	名山縣		
Nanchong	南充市		
Nanchong C	南充縣		
Nanping C	南坪縣		

Note:

C — County

AC — Autonomous County

Sichuanese Cuisine: Variety is the Spice of Life

When one mentions the word Sichuan, more often than not the first thing that comes to mind is spicy food. Such a strong impression is a valid indication of the extent to which the spicy Sichuan cuisine is widely enjoyed. Sichuanese are justifiably proud of their cuisine, one of the four major cuisines of China, along with the cuisines of Shandong, Guangdong and Yangzhou. Of the four, Sichuan food is renowned for its spiciness. Living in a basin area where the majority of days are cloudy and overcast, the locals use chilli peppers to ward off the effects of the wet weather, or so the Sichuanese say.


However, food connoisseurs point out that Sichuan food does not always mean spicy dishes. Of the hundreds of Sichuan dishes, they mention that only about fifteen per cent are spicy. But it is this small but prominent minority which has played a major role in making Sichuan food a favourite around the world.

In fact, Sichuan cuisine is famous for its diversity of tastes, freshness, ingenuity in cooking methods and selection of ingredients and condiments. The Sichuan Basin,

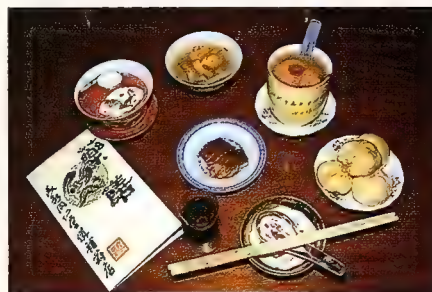
in particular, is situated on land with fertile soil and moderate climate, having a growing season nearly 350 days long, and Chengdu in particular is rich in agricultural and aquatic products which provide fresh and varied ingredients. An example of this variety is found in a local dish called *douhuafan*, or tender bean curd. This simple course includes some 42 different condiments. Chengdu now offers more than 500 varieties of snack food. Many, like Lai Dumplings and *dandan* noodles, have become popular all over the country.

Another factor contributing to the potpourri of courses here is that because of favourable agricultural conditions, meat and vegetables are cheaper in Chengdu than in most other places within China, so everybody can afford to eat out. This means good business for restaurants and food stands in the city. Chengdu now has more than 20,000 restaurants, many of which are open around the clock.

Most of the Sichuanese restaurants outside of the province also include a considerable number of dishes which are from Shandong and Guangdong on the menu.

Purists may decry what they perceive as a deviation from traditional Sichuanese style. But the professionals counter with the arguments that by clinging too close to the traditional style, they as individuals and the cuisine as a whole fails to develop. They go on to add that any cuisine is improved by adopting features from other cuisines. With Sichuan's master chefs abiding by this eclectic philosophy, Sichuanese cuisine will continue to add a new flavour to the expression that "variety is the spice of life". 

The medicinal dishes of the Tongrentang Pharmacy in Chengdu play an important role in Sichuan cuisine (by Wu Zhuoming).



**Average Climatic Conditions in Beijing,
Sichuan and Guangdong**

		Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	April	May	June	July	Aug.	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.
Beijing	Temperature (°C)	-4.6	-2.2	4.5	13.1	19.8	24.0	25.8	24.4	19.4	12.4	4.1	-2.7
	Rainfall (mm)	3.0	7.4	8.6	19.4	33.1	77.8	192.5	212.3	57.0	24.0	6.6	2.6
Chengdu	Temperature (°C)	5.6	7.6	12.1	17.0	21.1	23.7	25.8	25.1	21.4	16.7	12.0	7.3
	Rainfall (mm)	5.0	11.4	21.8	51.1	88.3	119.4	228.9	265.8	113.5	47.9	16.5	6.4
Chongqing	Temperature (°C)	7.5	9.4	14.0	18.8	22.2	25.2	28.6	28.4	24.0	18.4	13.9	9.4
	Rainfall (mm)	18.8	20.9	43.2	72.3	155.4	165.4	150.7	141.0	132.3	99.2	51.2	24.7
Guangzhou	Temperature (°C)	13.3	14.4	17.9	21.9	25.6	27.2	28.4	28.1	26.9	23.7	19.4	15.2
	Rainfall (mm)	36.9	54.5	80.7	175.0	293.8	287.8	212.7	232.5	189.3	69.2	37.0	24.7

International Flights to and from Beijing

Route	Days of Week	Dep.	Arr.	Flight No.
Bangkok—Beijing	3	14:20 09:00	19:25 16:00	CZ370 CZ374
Beijing—Bangkok	3	09:25 13:30	13:05 19:00	CZ369 CZ373
Frankfurt—Beijing	2 4 6	16:00	08:40	CA932
Beijing—Frankfurt	2 4 6	10:05	14:00	CA931
Kuala Lumpur—Beijing	6	09:00	17:00	CZ366
Beijing—Kuala Lumpur	5	11:30	19:30	CZ365
Los Angeles—Beijing	2 5	13:00	21:40 (Next Day)	MU584
Beijing—Los Angeles	2 5	11:25	11:00	MU583
Moscow—Beijing	1 4	20:45	09:25	CA910
Beijing—Moscow	1	08:25	11:45	CA907
Beijing—Moscow	1	15:25	19:10	CA909
New York—Beijing	4 7	08:40	22:20 (Next Day)	CA982
Beijing—New York	3 6	10:10	18:50	CA981
Paris—Beijing	3	10:00	11:45 (Next Day)	CA950
Paris—Beijing	1	16:00	09:00 (Next Day)	CA934
Beijing—Paris	2	16:55	07:50 (Next Day)	CA949
Beijing—Paris	1	09:45	14:00	CA933
Singapore—Beijing	2 4 6	09:30	17:10	CA978
Beijing—Singapore	1 5	09:30	17:10	CA958
Beijing—Singapore	1	09:40	17:30	CA977
Sydney—Beijing	3 6 7	09:20	17:30	CA957
Beijing—Sydney	6	10:50	22:05	CA173
Beijing—Sydney	5	15:05	09:30 (Next Day)	CA173
Tokyo—Beijing	1 4 5	16:55	20:35	CA930
Beijing—Tokyo	1 3 5 7	14:55	18:35	CA926
Beijing—Tokyo	1	08:30	14:55	CA929
Beijing—Tokyo	1 3 5 7	08:50	13:50	CA925

(Valid Winter 1992—Spring 1993)

Flights (Domestic) to and from Beijing

Route	Days of Week	Dep.	Arr.	Flight No.
Changchun—Beijing	5	13:30	15:25	SZ4606
	6	10:30	12:10	CJ6343
Beijing—Changchun	1 2 3 4 5 6 7	17:35	19:15	CJ6141
	5	10:55	12:20	SZ4605
Chongqing—Beijing	6	18:20	20:00	CJ6344
	1 2 3 4 5 6 7	10:15	11:55	CJ6142
Beijing—Chongqing	6	07:25	09:25	SZ4645
	1 2 3 4 5 7	13:10	15:30	SZ4141
Dalian—Beijing	6	15:35	18:10	SZ4646
	1 2 3 4 5 7	16:30	19:10	SZ4142
Beijing—Dalian	1	21:10	22:20	CA952
	4 7	21:00	22:10	CA952
Guangzhou—Beijing	3	16:40	17:40	CJ6422
	6	20:45	21:45	CJ6138
Beijing—Guangzhou	1 4 7	08:55	09:55	CA951
	1 2 4 5	15:10	17:55	CZ3109
Jilin—Beijing	1 2 3 4 6 7	08:20	11:00	CZ3101
	1 2 3 4 5 6 7	10:55	13:35	CZ3103
Shenyang—Beijing	1 2 3 4 5 6 7	14:00	16:50	WH2138
	1 2 4 5	19:00	21:50	CZ3110
Beijing—Shenyang	1 2 3 4 6 7	12:05	14:50	CZ3102
	1 2 3 4 5 6 7	14:25	17:15	CZ3104
Yantai—Beijing	1 2 3 4 5 6 7	10:25	13:05	WH2137
	1	12:30	14:20	CJ6151
Beijing—Yantai	1	09:25	11:15	CJ6152
	5	07:35	08:55	CJ6107
Shenyang—Beijing	1 2 3 4 5 6 7	08:00	09:20	CJ6101
	5	20:30	21:40	CJ6108
Beijing—Shenyang	1 2 3 4 5 6 7	20:15	21:25	CJ6102
	2	14:25	15:35	MU5115
Yantai—Beijing	1 3 6	10:30	12:20	MU5117
	2 5	11:35	12:45	MU5116
Beijing—Yantai	1 3 6	13:10	15:05	MU5118
	2 5			

(Valid Winter 1992—Spring 1993)

Sanxingdui — Sichuan's Most Significant Archaeological Site

(Continued from page 11)

History of Ba-Shu Culture Pushed Back

Why is it that the cultural accumulations in the Yueliangwan area are so abundant and the cultural relics so widely distributed?

Feng Hanji, a famous archaeologist and curator at the Sichuan provincial museum, and a professor from the History Department of Sichuan University both believe that this area was probably an important political, economic and cultural centre of the ancient Shu Kingdom. The place where hoarded jade and stone objects had been uncovered could well be the site of handicraft workshops. They inferred that it was very likely that workshops for processing jade and stone objects existed in the vicinity of the Yueliangwan area during the reign of King Du Yu of the ancient Shu Kingdom. A coup d'état launched by Kai Ming's family forced people to bury in a hurry all their possessions which have been remarkably well preserved until today.

From 1989 to 1990, archaeologists, in their excavation and dissection of the southern and eastern city walls at the Sanxingdui site, found that these walls had been built by employing the rammed earth technique both horizontally and vertically. On the top of the wall was a ridge built of adobe. The extant ruins of the walls measure six to eight metres high and over forty metres long, and are surrounded by a trench. These dimensions suggest that the Sanxingdui site was possibly the early capital of the Shu Kingdom.


More significantly, the archaeological evidence from these excavations has extended the periodization of the Ba-Shu culture back to the Xia, Shang and Western Zhou Dynasties. This is in contrast to the previous evidence dating the culture to the Spring and Autumn and Warring States periods (770-221 B.C.). This latest information has pushed the history of the Ba-Shu culture back 1,000 years. Thus, it is only natural that the Sanxingdui site has become the focal point for further research of the ancient Ba-Shu culture.

The Moon and Three Stars Terrain

Where, then, exactly is the Sanxingdui site?

Sanxingdui is actually situated at the Sanxing Village and Zhenwu Village areas of Nanxing Town, about ten kilometres from Guanghan City in Sichuan. The sites where cultural relics are distributed at Sanxingdui cover approximately ten square kilometres. The location of what once was a wide ancient riverbed, referred to as the Mamu River by the locals, runs across the middle of the site.

As to the origin of the name Sanxingdui or Three Star Mounds, it is so named because of the three earth mounds on the south bank of the Mamu River. Perched ten metres high side-by-side in the fields, they all have an oval top and are wider from east to west than from north to south. At the same time, the profile of the tableland on the north riverbank stretches like a crescent moon. Therefore, the terrain here is called The Moon Accompanied by Three Stars, with "sanxing", or "three stars", referring to the three earth heaps on the south bank, and "yueliang" or "moon" to the tableland in the north. As mentioned earlier, these mounds contain the remnants of ancient walls.

It is just within these confines with such a poetic name that a long period of history has seen the light of day after being hidden for so many years. 

Translated by Xia Ping

Kazakhstan-Beijing Air Route

The first direct air link between **Beijing** and **Alma Ata**, capital of Kazakhstan was inaugurated in December, 1992, improving transportation ties between the two countries. A twice-weekly air route has already linked Alma Ata with Ürümqi, capital of Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region.

Foshan-Hong Kong Daily Train

A daily train service recently started from Foshan in Guangdong Province has become the second direct rail service to Hong Kong after Guangzhou. The new station at Foshan occupies 60,000 square metres of floor space with the building area taking up 23,000 square metres. The customs building has 21 exits for convenient customs clearance.

Novelties Fair in June

Beijing Novelties '93, scheduled to run from June 23-28, will feature 28 kinds of products from both foreign and domestic novelties producers and traders. These product lines include daily necessities, porcelain, garments, furniture, embroidery, toys, shoes, jewellery, cloisonné, painting and calligraphy, sporting goods and building materials and will introduce trends in the novelties industry. Domestic and foreign participants can exchange information and technology while making deals on patents, barter trade, processing and assembly with consigned materials and even negotiate joint ventures.

Jin Dynasty Tomb Site

A large tomb dating from the Eastern Jin Dynasty (317-420) has recently been discovered in the Gobi Desert, just ten kilometres from the famous Mogao Grottoes at Dunhuang. The grave is 9.5 metres deep with a passage 32 metres long. Its coffin chamber is decorated with 42 brick sculptures and coloured paintings, most of which depict strange birds, animals and characters in fairy tales. The sculptures and frescoes in the grave are believed to be at least 100 years older than the frescoes in the Mogao Grottoes and should be categorized as art of the early stages from the Mogao Grottoes.

Air China Accepts Diners Club Card

The Diners Club Card, an internationally used credit card, is to be accepted when paying for tickets and service charges of Air China. The Bank of China, China's major foreign exchange bank, will provide financial settlement services for the two corporations. The acceptance of the Diners Card by Air China underscores a strong intention from the bank and the airline to further boost China's tourism industry.

Important Tang Buddhist Temple Unearthed

Ximing Temple, a temple reported to have been built by imperial order during the Tang Dynasty (618-907), has been excavated in Xi'an, formerly the Tang capital, in Shaanxi Province. Xuan Zang, a Chinese monk who undertook a pilgrimage to India to get Buddhist scriptures and became the inspiration for the novel *Journey to the West*, was invited to be the first abbot. The temple also attracted famous monks from Japan and experts point out that the architectural style and inscriptions had a profound influence on Japanese temples. The temple site consists of three well-preserved connected compounds. The major palace, with a 76-by-29-metre foundation, is in the middle compound and surrounded by a winding corridor.

Fifty-Nine More Places Open to Foreigners

As of December 18, 1992, the following areas have been newly opened to foreign visitors possessing valid visas or residence permits. These 59 places are listed as follows:

Jilin: Helong County, Dunhua City;

Heilongjiang: Mishan City, Hulin County, Jiayin County;

Hubei: Macheng City;

Jiangxi: Counties of Longnan, Huichang, Ningdu, Dingnan, Yudu and Gao'an;

Inner Mongolia: Banners of Otog, Ejina Horo and Jungar, Jining City;

Yunnan: Cities of Dongchuan and Zhaotong, counties of Zhongdian, Qiubei, Huaping, Shiping, Mengzi, Yuanyang, Honghe, Lüchun, Wenshan, Yanshan, Funing, Guangnan, Malipo, Lincang, Xichou, Maguan, Huaning, Yimen, Yunxian, Fengqing, Lushui, Zhenxiong, Shuifu, Weixin, Yiliang, Dagan, Yanjin and Suijiang, Ninglang Yi Autonomous County, Hekou Yao Autonomous County, Jinping Miao, Yao and Dai Autonomous County, Pingbian Miao Autonomous County, Xinping Yi and Dai Autonomous County, Eshan Yi Autonomous County, Gengma Dai and Va Autonomous County, Cangyuan Va Autonomous County, Shuangjiang Lahu, Va, Bulang and Dai Autonomous County, Menglian Dai, Lahu and Va Autonomous County, Jiangcheng Hani and Yi Autonomous County, Lancang Lahu Autonomous County and Ximeng Va Autonomous County.

Ocean Recreation Facility in Beihai, Guangxi

An ocean pleasure ground, which the developers claim is the largest in Asia, is presently under construction in Beihai Silver Beach. At the beach, designated as one of eleven state tourist resorts, the ground is the largest foreign invested project in the area, with capital from Australia, Thailand, Hong Kong and Taiwan. The new resort will feature ocean sports activities, Chinese medical care, shopping areas, museums and amusement facilities. The main component of the project, the Hengli Ocean Sports and Recreational Resort Centre, will cover an area of 62.3 hectares with a total capital investment of US\$95 million.

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NEXT ISSUE

In our next issue, we cut a wide swath through China's deep south, first visiting tropical Hainan Island in the South China Sea. Hainan is China's newest province, as well as its largest special economic zone and its second largest island.

We then venture to Kunming, capital of Yunnan in the southwest, a city set in beautiful environs and blessed with a climate to match. Then we wind up by stopping by two adjacent sites in mountainous Guizhou, also in the southwest. Fanjing Mountain features a variety of rare plants and animals in a virgin environment exuding an aura of mystery, as the mountain is often shrouded in rain, fog and mist. Jiangkou County at the foot of Fanjing Mountain is also pristinely picturesque, and the Tujia and Miao natives extend warm hospitality to boot!

• Hainan Island Revisited



• A Visit to Peaceful Jiangkou County



• Fanjing Mountain, a World of Wonders



• Kunming, the City of Eternal Spring

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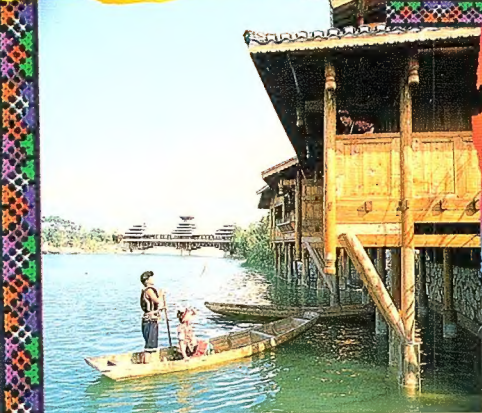
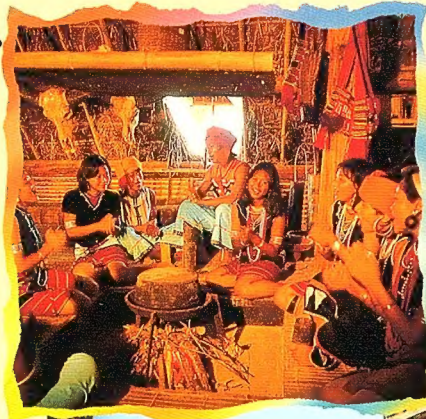
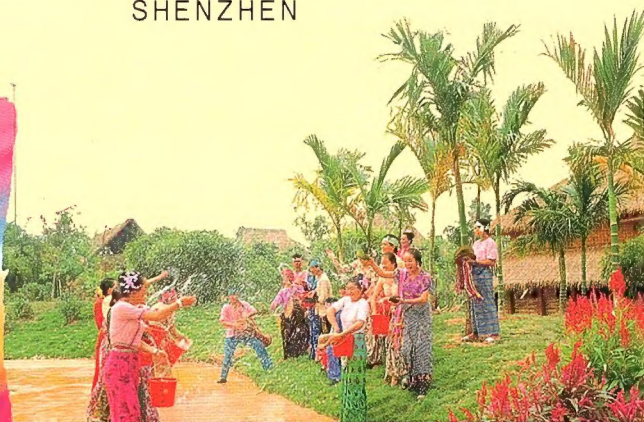
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